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Wrestling REVUE

FALL 1960

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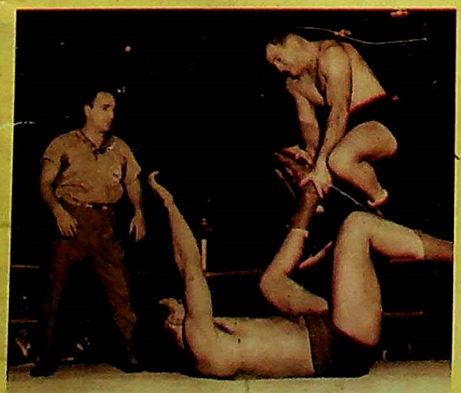

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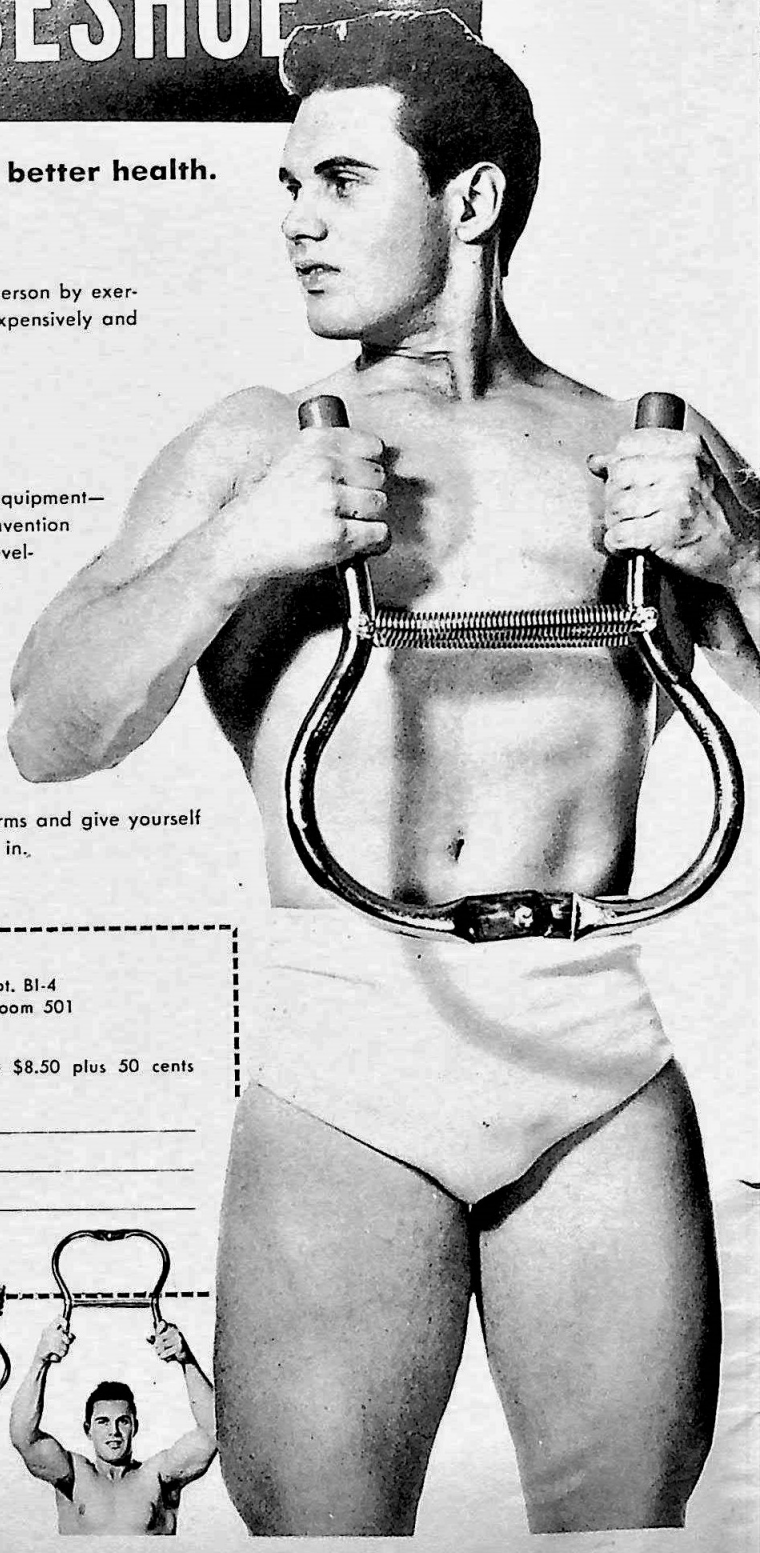

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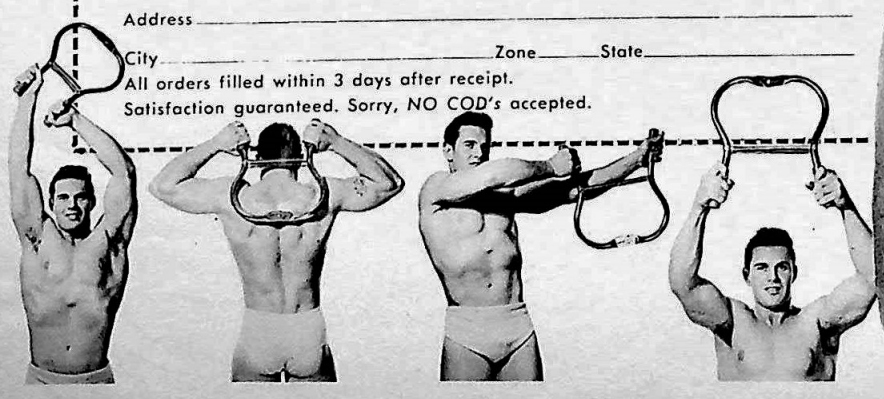

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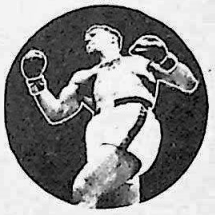

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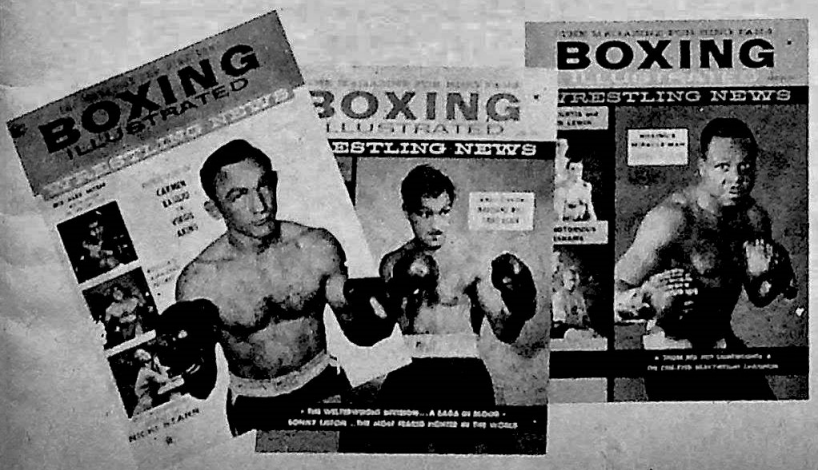

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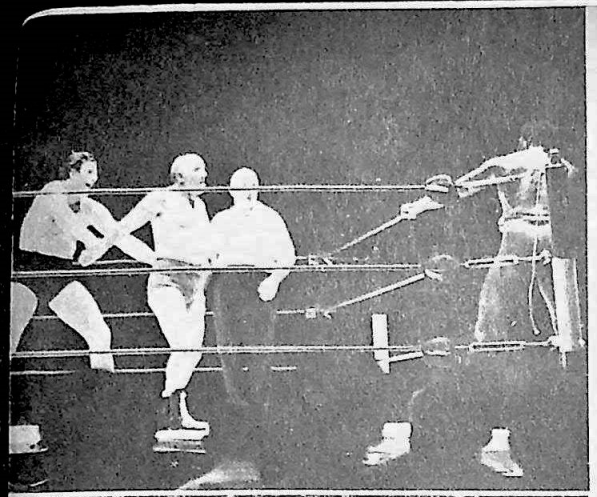

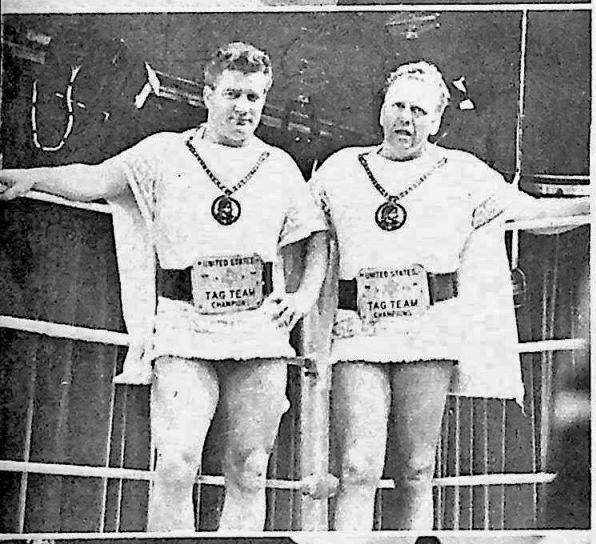

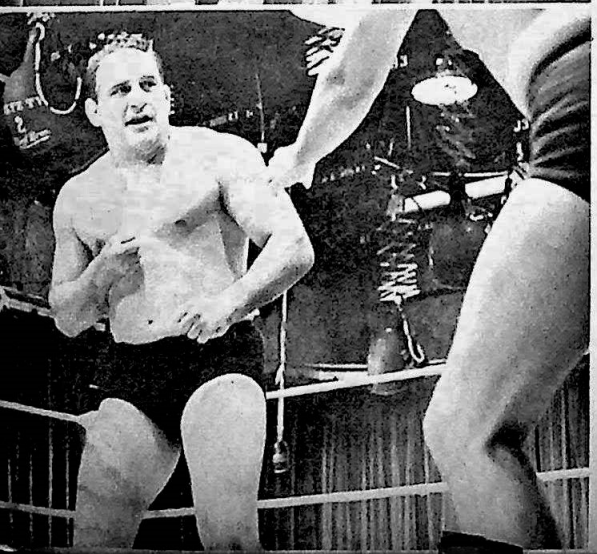

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Wrestling REVUE

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STANLEY WESTON, Editor & Publisher

HAL HENNESEY, Editorial Director **ROBERT J. THORNTON,** Managing Editor

Assistant Editors:

MICHAEL A. GLICK, ALLEN RESSLER, MEL BEERS, HENRY KRAWEIC, TOBY PATRICK

Art Director: **ALFRED GUTZMER**

ABE GLICK, President **JACOB ROSENBLUTH,** Vice-President

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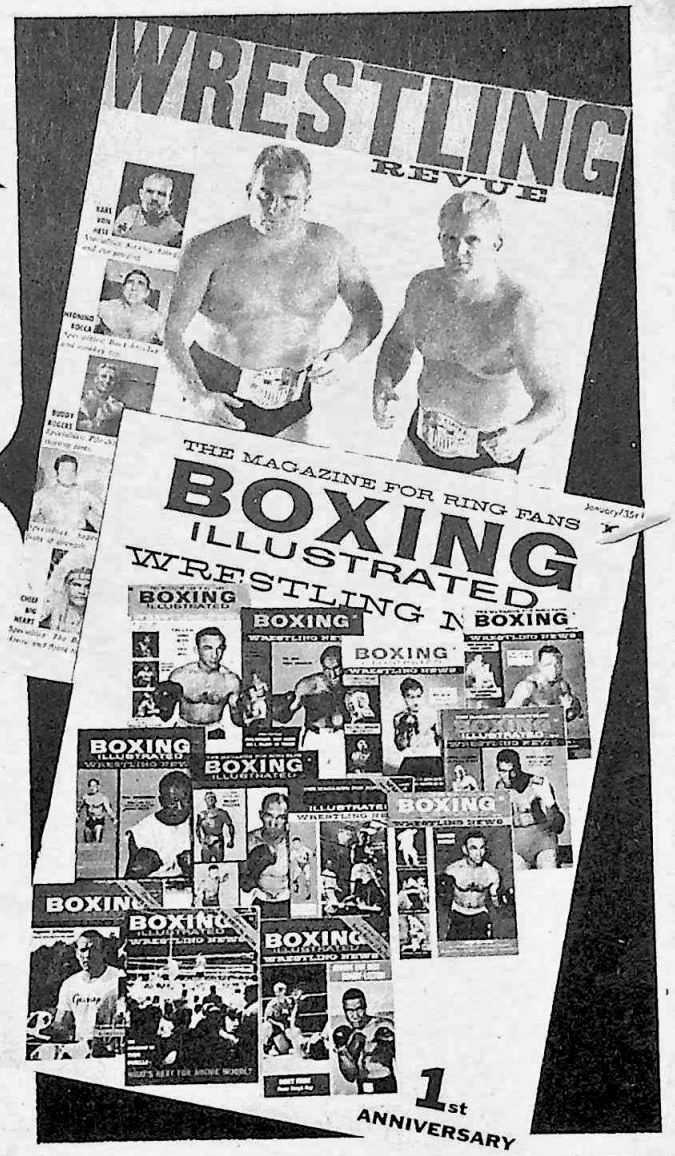

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KILLER KOWALSKI

EVERETTE MARSHALL

After more than five thousand matches during

THE TOUGHEST

JUST ABOUT SEVEN YEARS AGO, I found myself in the most embarrassing predicament of my life. After resorting to every hold in the book, only to have my opponent break free, I was on the verge of calling it quits. At the end of a hectic hour's wrestling I relaxed for a split second. It was a bad mistake!

Suddenly, the whole world seemed to turn upside down. There I was, held by my opponent at arm's length! Yes, he was holding my whole 235 pounds over his head as if I were a baby. Who was this powerhouse? Killer Kowalski, the strongest man I ever faced in the ring.

I must rate this particular match with Killer as one of the toughest of my entire career! and that's the best tribute I can pay Kowalski because, as you may know, my career goes back 25 years and about 5,000 bouts.

I have been interviewed many, many times during my career and I can't remember the reporter who failed to ask the question: "Which was your hardest bout? During the first few years it wasn't hard to answer. But as time passed, I met better men and hence the competition was more severe. And, of course, the question became harder to answer. Today, looking back on all those matches, and all those great men I've met in the ring, I find that I cannot pick one bout as the toughest of them all. So I have selected five. These are the matches that stand out above all the others. They are still so vivid in my mind that I can recall every maneuver in each of these bouts.

Looking at them in reverse order (the most recent first), was my bout in Montreal in 1955 with Killer Kowalski. There is a wrestler who could have held his own with any of the past greats. He would have given the fabled Frank Gotch a run for his money, and Zbyszko and Lewis and all the others whom we have come to consider as wrestling's true immortals.

Kowalski's strength is utterly fantastic. Unless you have faced him in the ring, no amount of words can make you realize the fantastic power that man holds in his body. I would say that Kowalski has everything a great wrestler must have; speed, a perfect sense of timing, courage and balance. And he can *think*. We met several times, and I consider myself lucky to have beaten him as often as I did. No matter what hold I clamped on him, he seemed to break loose with an almost frightening display of strength. If I got him in a headlock, he just pulled out of it. And when I tried for a toe hold, he just straightened out his pole-like leg.

I wouldn't say that I was desperate in my last bout with Killer. But I was worried. After trying to break through his defense without success for almost an hour, I decided to try a do-or-die maneuver my old trainer, George Tragos,

BOBBY MANAGOFF

RAY STEELE

VERNE GAGNE

the past 25 years, a great former world's champion tells about . . .

BOUTS OF MY CAREER

BY LOU THESZ

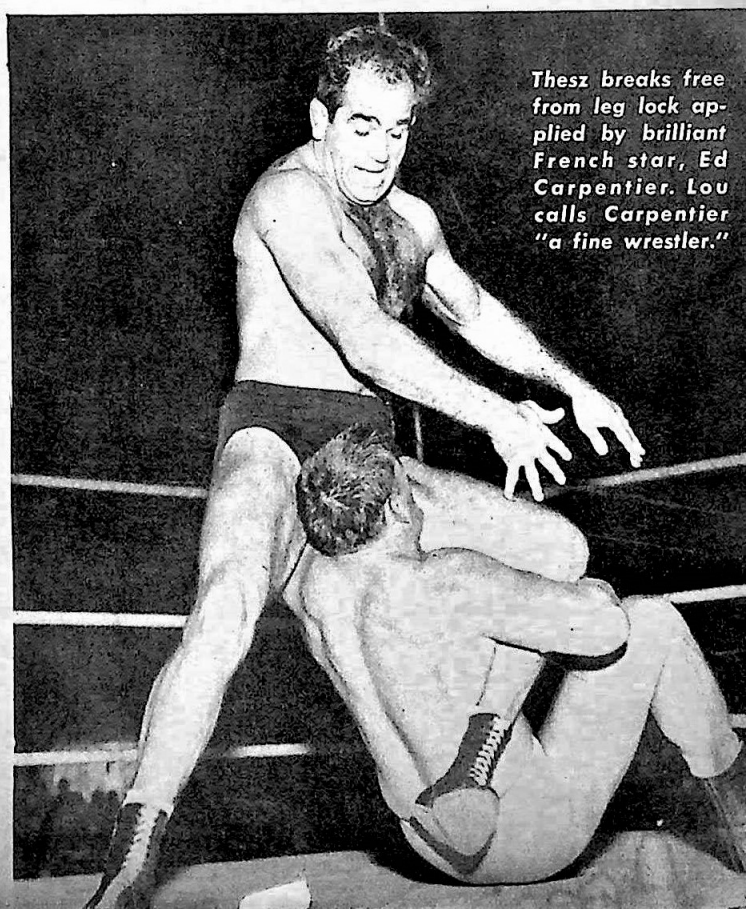
taught me.

"Lou," George used to say, "when the going gets real rough, pull this one on 'em. If you don't beat 'em with it you might as well roll over and give up."

What George Tragos was talking about was a reverse body slam. I worked it on Killer Kowalski. First I let him get me in a front chancery. I "fed him my head," to put it in wrestling talk. As he held me in his chancery, I grabbed his arms, making sure he kept his hold. Then I flipped him high into the air over my back and down on the mat. Then I fell across his shoulders. The referee counted him out: "1-2-3!" I could have held him down as long as I wanted to in that position.

I did the very same thing to Bobby Managoff, another of my five toughest opponents. But before getting into that particular bout, let me first talk about my match with the great Verne Gagne, a match which almost cost me my title. I don't have to tell you about Gagne. You probably already know that he is one of the most skillful wrestlers of all time. A former football star, he adapted gridiron tactics to wrestling with the same success as Bronko Nagurski did before him.

My bouts with Gagne pitted science verses science. Usually, whenever this happens, it turns into a "wrestlers wrestling match," but one without much excitement. The



Thesz breaks free from leg lock applied by brilliant French star, Ed Carpentier. Lou calls Carpentier "a fine wrestler."

average fan doesn't go for that sort of thing. He prefers drop kicks, flying tackles and other spectacular moves. But on October 27, 1951, I met Gagne in a match which many who were there consider the greatest bout they ever saw. One old timer told me it reminded him of the Jim Londos-Strangler Lewis match in Madison Square Garden in 1932. I consider that one of the finest compliments I ever received.

Gagne and I mixed science with slam-bang tactics. I won't offer any excuses for the closeness of that match, but I do want to get it on the record that at the time I was beginning to wear thin at the seams since I had been wrestling about four times a week, most of them very hard bouts. The Gagne match took place in Milwaukee. Since Milwaukee was one of Gagne's old stamping grounds, the crowd, naturally, was rooting for him. Thus he had whatever psychological advantage that may have offered.

We started fast from the opening bell, taking one fall each. Then we pulled out all stops for the third and deciding fall. Gagne kept trying to work me into his specialty: The Sleeper Hold. I, of course, was trying for my pet, the Reverse Body Slam. But neither of us was successful, since we knew exactly what the other had in mind. It was a kind of stalemate, a dead-end street, so to speak.

I admit that the end came just at a time when Gagne might have pinned me. I could feel myself weakening fast when the curfew bell ended the match. Maybe, had it not sounded at that particular moment, I might have summoned up enough strength to pull a victory out of the fire. But I'll never know for sure.

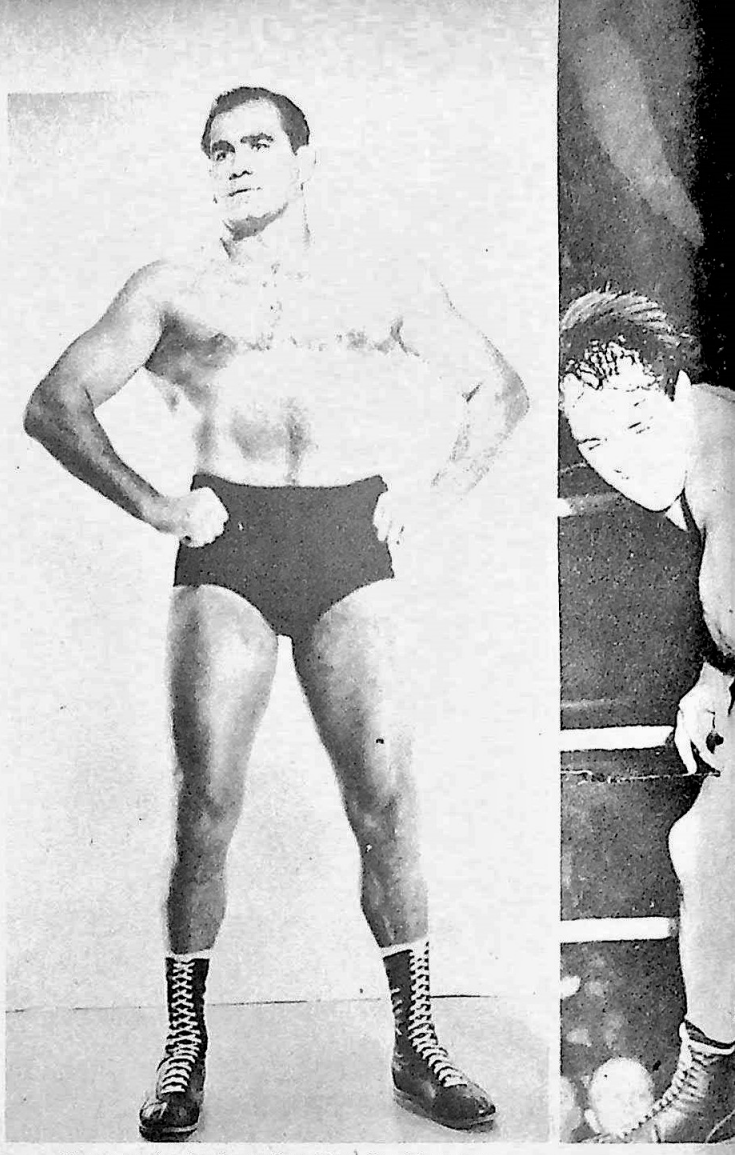
That match with Gagne took place during what I call the "Middle Phase of my Career." I won the title in 1947. Many people, especially the younger fans, don't realize that this was the second time around for me. I got a big kick out of the reporters and fans asking, "Lou, how does it feel to be champion?" And I would say, *"This* time it feels even better." They would look at me with a puzzled look on their faces.

As I said before, Bobby Managoff gave me one of the roughest night's I've ever experienced in the ring. Bobby, like his father before him, was an exceptionally good wrestler. Bob, Senior never won the title, although he once beat the great Frank Gotch by breaking his leg. People used to ask the old man how come he never won the championship while his son did. He would answer with a grim look on his face, "that's easy. I had to contend with fellows like Gotch and Hackenschmidt. This boy of mine has only fellows like Thesz to worry about!"

And I sure had to worry about Bobby! He beat me in our first bout. So when we met in a return match I was determined to get even. Managoff relied on a rough, aggressive style to wear down his opponents. He liked to drop kick a man all over the ring, and when he had the guy so groggy that he thought it was yesterday, he'd start a series of body slams that generally brought him a victory. He tried the same thing on me.

I purposely played into his hands. The bout grew rougher and rougher as it progressed. We traded elbow smashes and hard punches in the face, the closed fist kind of punches. And how that Managoff can punch! He can knock you dead with a three inch wallop to a vital spot. But I traded him punch for punch and the crowd roared its approval.

Finally, Bobby clamped me in a vice-like headlock. It must have looked like the end for me, and for the next few minutes that's exactly how it felt. But what the crowd, and Managoff, didn't know was that it was my plan to make him get that hold on me. It was the first part of my strategy. Step number two was to wait for the exact moment to make my move. I knew he would have to relax sooner or later. That's what I was depending on.



Thesz as he looks today. Despite his years, he is in perfect physical condition.

Had I not made my move at exactly the right instant, he might have won the bout with his headlock. But experience was on my side and it paid off. After squeezing my head until it felt like an overripe watermelon, I felt him ease up. I sprang into high gear and back-slammed him, just as I had done with Killer Kowalski and so many others. And just as it had brought me victory on so many other occasions, it brought me victory over Bobby Managoff — a very sweet victory.

I was pretty well beat myself. I had to stay in bed two whole days after the match. Managoff's terrific body slams, together with his crushing headlock, had given me a mild concussion.

For another of my toughest bouts, number four, I must really dig back into history. The country was still in the throes of the depression, the Spanish Revolution had just begun, and a funny little guy named Hitler was making loud noises in Germany. I was a kid wrestler trying to get a break. It was 1936. When I think of how long ago that is, I feel very old. Why most of today's wrestling fans —

Verne Gagne, who Thesz rates as the most scientific wrestler of modern times, heaves Lou across the ring during Milwaukee bout.

weren't even born yet!

It was a good year for me. I had done very well under the guidance of the great Ed "Strangler" Lewis, who was grooming me to succeed him as champion. But a very powerful wrestler out of Trinidad, Colorado named Everette Marshall beat me to the title. I aimed for a match with Marshall, but first I had to get past a man named Ray Steele, who was even tougher than his name sounds. Getting past Steele was like trying to get past a tank.

We met in St. Louis and before I knew it I was knocked flat on my belly, locked in a combination toe hold and hammer lock. Mind you, Steele had been an amateur champion. Now he was a very competent professional while I was green and only twenty. But I learned a great deal from Ray in that bout. He taught me that in order to be tops in any business, a man must give it a little something extra. Which is exactly what I did, and it was good enough to get me the victory. It also helped get me a title bout with Everette Marshall the following year. Which brings me to another of the toughest bouts of my career.

Marshall is an under-rated former champion, for he suffers by comparison with Strangler Lewis and the other great stars of the era who were on the wane when Everette won the title. But make no mistake about it, he was a very good, exceptionally tough, wrestler. I found that out the hard way.

I beat Marshall on December 29, 1937 to become champion of the world. But after it was over, and I had staggered back to my dressing room, I threw myself on the rubbing table where I stayed for the next hour, so tired that I couldn't move a muscle. That match took a great deal out of me. It lasted three exhausting hours and I doubt that I rested more than three minutes during the entire time.

Marshall started fast, trying obviously to show me who was boss from the very beginning. He grabbed me in a bear hug, released me, then hugged me again. Then he almost scrambled my brains with a terrific pile-driver.

After an hour of the roughest kind of wrestling I've ever experienced, I got a premonition. After two hours, the premonition grew stronger, even as I got weaker. I had the feeling, though, that Marshall was even weaker than I.

He won the first fall and it was obvious that the fans expected him to win the next fall and the match. But I came back strong, took advantage of my youth and speed and won the second and third falls and the heavyweight championship of the world. Was I happy? Of course, but, in a way, so was Marshall. When he shook my hand he grinned. "Now you're troubles are just beginning, Lou," he said. How right he was. Every wrestler in the world is out gunning for the champion, trying to take away his title. It's a tough, lonely life.

Everette took a three month vacation to recover from the effects of our match. But, since I was so young, that hour's rest in the dressing room was all I needed.

There you have them — my five toughest matches. Oddly enough, you'll notice that, in each case, the toughest matches were bouts which I won. The ones I lost were not as tough, because, in order to win, one must give that little "extra" something I mentioned before. It's the thing that makes a champion. It's the thing that makes a man add a quarter-inch to the world high jump record, or run a mile in less than four minutes, or come back from a beating to win the final round of a championship prize fight.

Maybe I can put it this way: It's easy to lose, and sometimes it's easy to win — but it's never easy to win the tough ones. Which is something every champion *must* do. ● *end*

Thesz, standing, looks on as his old teacher, Strangler Lewis, right, signs with Honolulu promoter Al Karasick.

READERS PROS AND CONS

PICTURE OF BRUNO

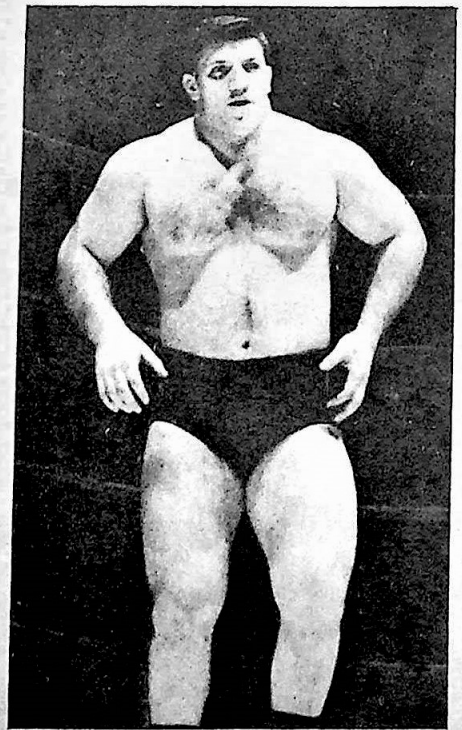
Sirs:

I have heard a great deal about a wrestler named Bruno Sammartino. Unfortunately, however, he has never wrestled in this part of the country. I am told that he is unbelieveably strong and has the body of a Hercules. Since I have no idea of what this superman looks like would you please publish a picture of him in your next issue.

SHEILA RYAN

Memphis, Tenn.

• See cut — ED.



BRUNO SAMMARTINO

LIKES OLD TIMERS

Sirs:

I enjoy WRESTLING REVUE tremendously. I especially liked "The Fine Art of Judo" (Summer/60). Please continue the same type coverage. Also, your stories about old time wrestlers are excellent. They provide a measure of comparison between the old and the new.

BILL LONSDALE

Rego Park, N. Y.

FROM ENGLAND

Sirs:

Thanks to an old friend in Tennessee I've had the opportunity of seeing both first and second issues of WRESTLING REVUE and I do find it heartening to see a magazine devoted only to wrestling and not sharing space with boxing. The photography in both issues was magnificent and whoever took the close-up photos of Fred Blassie and Skull Murphy is a genius. I don't get the opportunity to see too many American wrestlers here in England but from time to time someone will turn up as did recently The Zebra Kid who caused a sensation everytime he entered the ring. Usually his entrance into the ring was preceded by a violent argument with either the crowd or a couple of old ladies — whoever happened to be handiest.

Masked wrestlers are rare here and somehow the big Zebra Kid seemed a lonely sort of a fellow in this strange country, especially since he came here at the cheerless, coldest time of the year — winter. I'd really like to know what goes on in the mind of the man under that fierce mask. I know he's really George Bollas and that he was once a football player, but I'm sure there's more to him than just that. An article similar to the one on Skull Murphy perhaps would be very welcomed by,

ALAN DODD

Herts, England

ROCCA AND GRAHAM

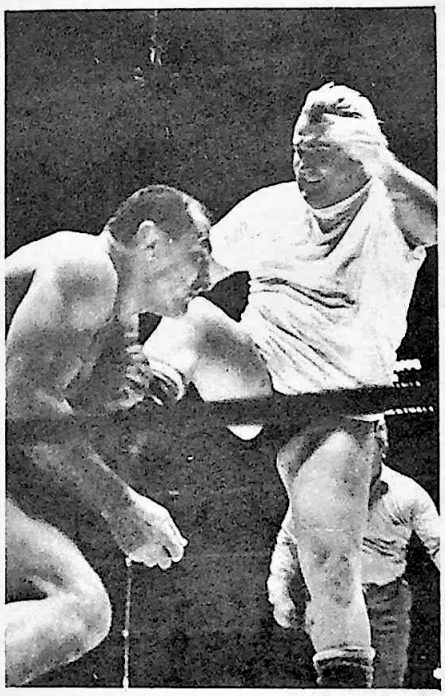
Sirs:

Is it true that during a wrestling show in New York's Madison Square last April Dr. Jerry Graham jumped into the ring with his street clothes and started a riot by attacking Antonino Rocca?

• All you say is correct with one exception. Graham was in his ring togs save for a white T-shirt. See cut — ED.

ANNA GOOD

Sacramento, Calif.



GRAHAM KICKS ROCCA

STOP THE RATINGS

Sirs:

I think your World Wrestling Ratings are absurd. Since it is humanly impossible for anybody to keep track of all the wrestlers in the world, or even a small part of them, how can you publish a just world rating? Certainly some very deserving wrestlers are unrated simply because their bouts go unobserved by those who do the rating. The fairest thing to do is to simply eliminate wrestling ratings entirely.

MARTIN DUNWOODIE

Kent, Conn.

PROTECT THE REFEREE!

Sirs:

Since WRESTLING REVUE is the official voice of the sport, I think it should launch an immediate drive to protect wrestling referees. It is disgraceful and a black eye to law and order every time a wrestler lays a hand on a referee. Such acts tend also to set the worst possible examples for the thousands of teenagers who watch wrestling. Let's have some quick action on this very sore point.

ALBERT J. DESCAMPES

New Orleans, La.

AMAZED

Sirs:

I was amazed to read in the Summer issue of WRESTLING REVUE that the Bastiens are not full brothers. I was also quite shocked to learn of their constant battling between each other. That is childish, and for their own good they should work as a well-oiled team out of the ring as well as in it.

LEEANNA UHLER

Finksburg, Maryland

THESZ CLEAN?

Sirs:

A few days after I read your article about Lou Thesz (Summer/60) I saw your great champion wrestle at the Boston Garden. He was an entirely different type wrestler than you depicted in your article. He kicked, gouged and committed every foul in the book. Did I see the same man you were writing about? It seems to me that one of us needs a new pair of glasses.

DAVID EPSTEIN

Brockton, Mass.

SORRY

Sirs:

I have never seen such dramatic photographs as have been appearing in WRESTLING REVUE. As a long time collector of wrestling pictures I wonder if it is possible to buy prints of some of your marvelous photos. I will be happy to pay any price for them.

FLORENCE GORDEN

Buffalo, N. Y.

• Regret that none of the photographs which appear in WRESTLING REVUE are available for sale — ED.

DIFFERENT FIRPOS

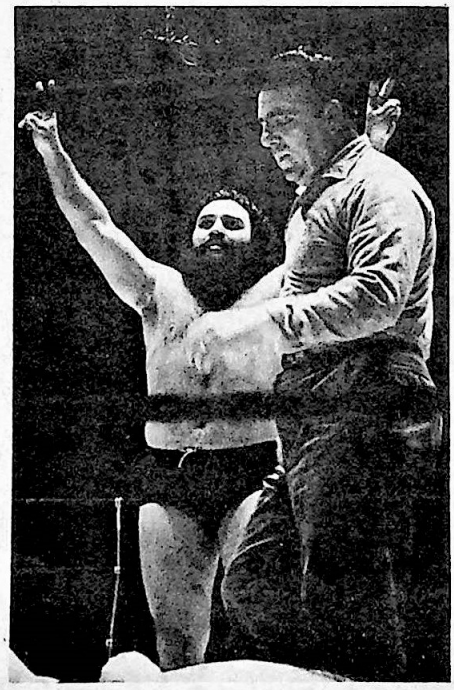
Sirs:

Is it true that the bearded wrestler Pampero Firpo is a brother of old time boxer, Luis Firpo? I am referring to the Luis Firpo who fought Jack Dempsey about 30 years ago.

LOUIS KAPLAN

Louisville, Ky.

• They are not related. See cut — ED.



PAMPERO FIRPO
No relation

A LONG WAIT

Sirs:

We wrestling fans have too long a wait between issues of your great magazine. Don't you think that only four issues per year are far too few?

• The publishers are now considering to making WRESTLING REVUE a Bi-Monthly (six issues per year) — ED.

AL KAMP

Memphis, Tenn.

KILL JUDO

Sirs:

You certainly wasted a great deal of valuable space publishing that "Fine Art of Judo" story in the Summer issue. I am certain that the vast majority of your readers would much rather have seen that space devoted to some of their favorite stars.

GOLDIE GREEN

Des Moines, Iowa

MORE ALBUM PHOTOS

Sirs:

Your autograph album section in the Summer/60 issue of WRESTLING REVUE was a marvelous idea. It is something I have always wanted. Since I live on the West Coast I thought, at first, that I could never possibly get the autographs of all the stars in the album. But a friend of mine in New York sent me his copy of WRESTLING REVUE and asked me to get the autographs of the wrestlers in my part of the country. This I did without much difficulty. When I returned his issue, I sent mine along with it and asked that he get me the autographs of the men wrestling in the east. I am happy to report that both our albums are now complete.

JOHN HANLON

Sacramento, Calif.

LORD ATHOL LAYTON

BY JOSEPH PAGE

THE BRAND NEW wrestling fan, watching her first match, happened to be sitting directly behind the television commentator at ringside. To her surprise, as the evening wore on, she found herself becoming more interested in the announcer than in what was going on in the ring. He was tall, clean cut and very handsome, that was obvious. Obvious too was his impeccable British accent. Dressed in a faultless tuxedo, the big man spoke smoothly and with apparent knowledge of the sport he was describing.

"Who," the young fan asked the man next to her, "is that announcer?"

"That's Lord Athol Layton—the best wrestling commentator in the country."

"Is he a *real* lord," she wanted to know, her heart now pumping a little faster. Informed that the big fellow was indeed a real English lord born in Surrey, the young lady now knew where she'd be spending her Saturdays between 4:30 to 5:30: at the Cleveland TV studio, watching the weekly wrestling matches—and listening to Lord Layton describing them.

It was at that moment that a terrible thing happened.

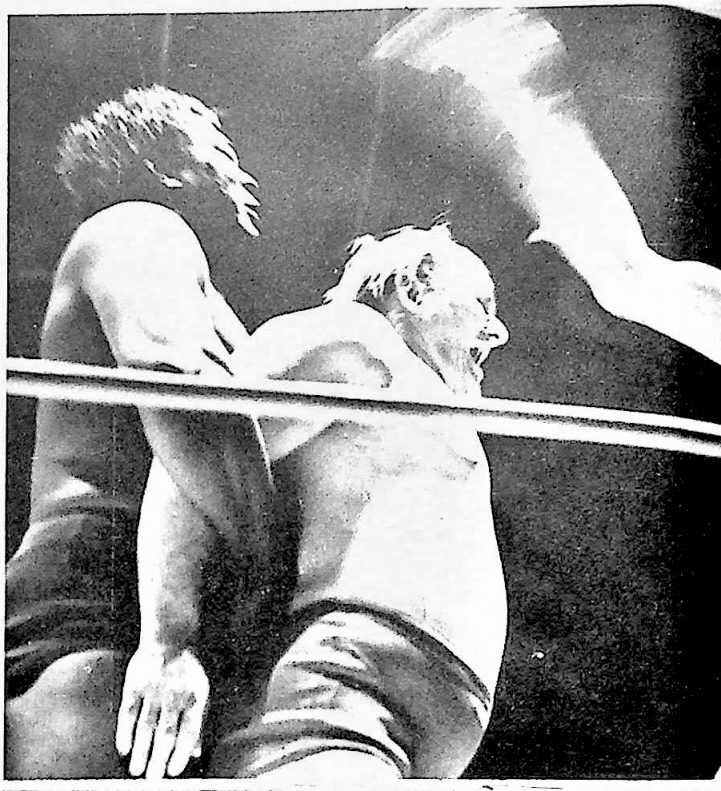
The main event of the night was on and threatening to get out of hand. The Gallagher Brothers, a riotous tag team noted for their inhumanity to man—especially their fellow wrestlers—were in the act of completely demolishing a couple of decent guys named Bobo Brazil and Dick Beyer. Since both Bobo and Dick are excellent wrestlers, they might have won the match had they stooped to the foul tactics used by the Gallaghers. But the fans expected them to play fair—and it was their nature to do so. As a result, they lost.

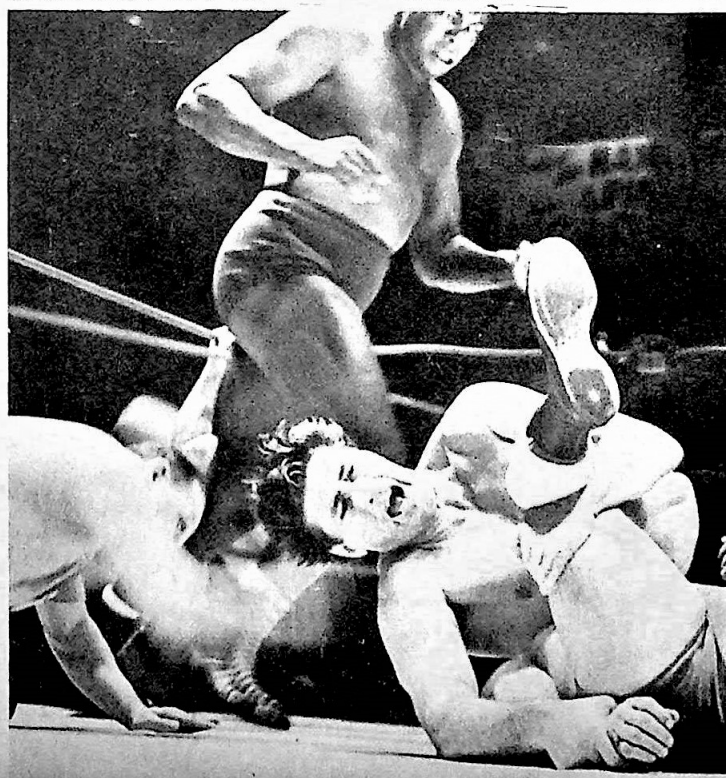
Lord Layton reported it something like this: "Here, ladies and gentleman, you have a prime example (he pronounced it ex-ahm-ple) of the type wrestling that I deplore. Brazil and Beyer are definitely superior athletes and, if the Gallaghers *wrestled*, instead of brawled, they would have been beaten. I'm terribly sorry it didn't happen that way."

The fans agreed with Layton. Clevelanders love the honest, fearless Englishman as much as they do Brazil and Beyer and their hometown baseball team, the Cleveland Indians.

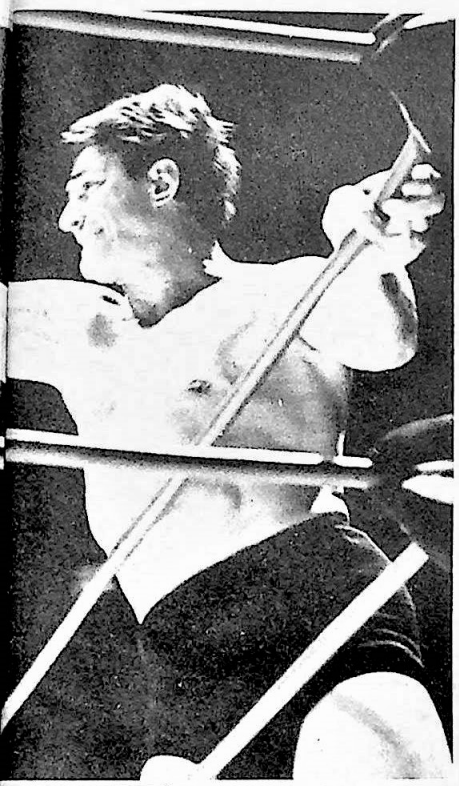
Mike Gallagher leaped over the ropes onto the ring apron and almost landed in Layton's tuxedoed lap. The villain snarled and the crowd gasped. Announcer Layton seized his microphone and took a quick step backward. He looked Gallagher squarely in the eye.

"You English know-it-all," rasped Mike, "you got too much to say. I'll cram your words right down your

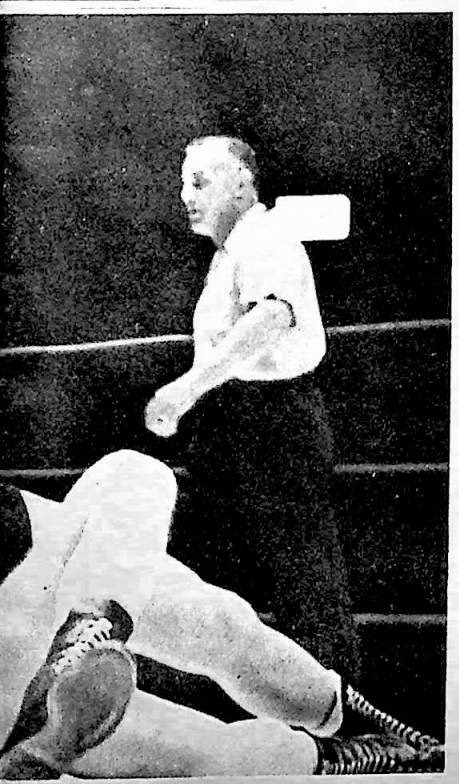




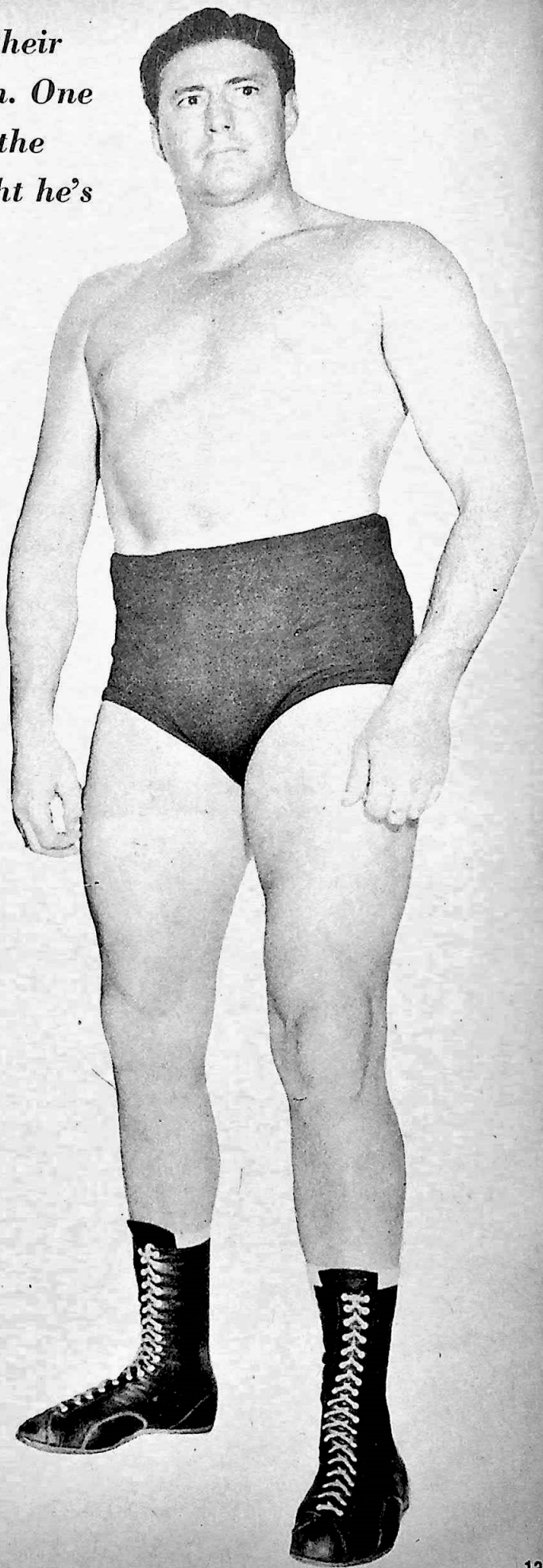
Cleveland mat fans can't make up their minds about this gigantic Englishman. One night he's describing the bouts over the local television station. The next night he's storming around the ring, making some despised villain dash for cover.



Layton's arm slams down on Doc Gallagher's head like a giant axe. Holding Doc's arms behind his back is Bobo Brazil, Layton's partner in this hectic Cleveland bout. After being clubbed half a dozen times, Gallagher slumped into unconsciousness. Brazil then relaxed his grip and Doc dropped to the canvas.



Layton dropped his 280-pounds across Mike Gallagher's body, clamped on a leg lock, and tried for for the pin. Brazil watches from behind. But Mike's brother, Doc, sneaked into the ring and pulled Layton away, thereby preventing certain defeat. Note the two referees who were needed to keep the bout from exploding into a riot.



throat!"

Layton didn't back up another step. He stood his ground and glared at the snarling Mike Gallagher. "Get back into that ring you congenital idiot," the dignified-looking announcer growled, "or I'll wrap this mike around your neck!" Meaning, no doubt, that he was ready to wrap mike around Mike.

Gallagher trembled with rage. The audience now began to realize that this was no publicity gimmick. Both men were boiling; Mike, in fact, was in a frenzy. "Okay, wise guy—I am challenging you to fight as well with your muscles as you do with your mouth! My brother and I will take you and anyone you name in a tag team match—right here in this ring. Anytime!"

The little wrestling fan sitting behind Layton was horrified. Her new hero was about to be ripped limb from limb, she was certain. She couldn't understand why the crowd kept shouting their approval of such a one-sided match. She was nearly beside herself with anguish when Lord Layton drew himself up to his full six-feet-six and proclaimed, "I will meet you in this ring next Saturday—and regardless of what happens between your brother and my chosen partner, I promise to give you a dose of your own medicine."

At that moment, the huge, likable Negro grappler, Bobo Brazil, rushed over and stood beside Layton. "Athol, let me be your partner in this! Together, we can beat some sense into those two guys."

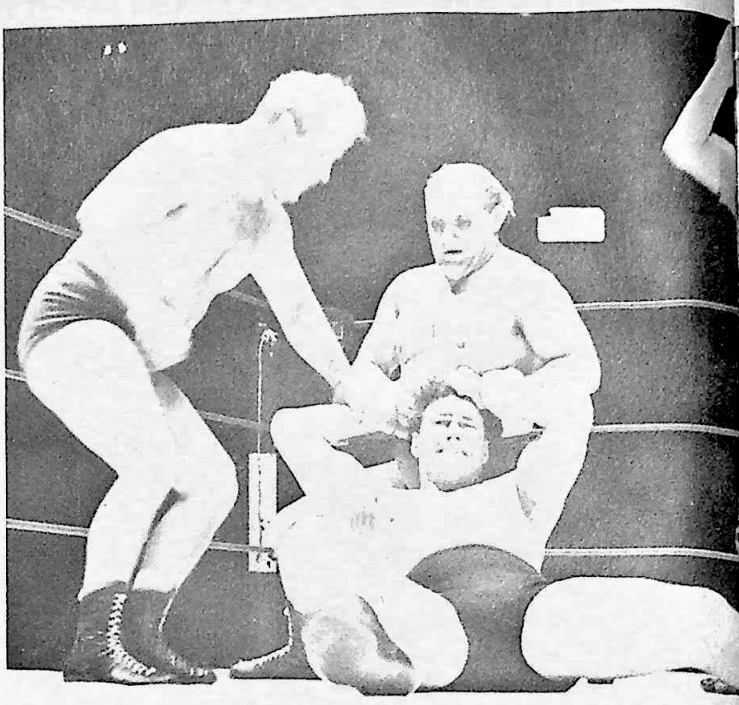
And so it was. The following Thursday, the little fan was first in line at the box office to get her ringside seat. Into the crowded Ice Palace strode the villainous Gallaghers to the sound of boos and catcalls. Then her hero entered, and her heart beat a little faster.

For this was no pot-bellied, limp-muscled TV announcer—this was a Viking-like athlete with powerful whipcord muscles that far surpassed the elephantine beefiness of the rival Gallaghers. Layton was matched in this respect by his partner, herculean Bobo Brazil. The little fan felt better, but not much. How could a TV announcer, however strong, hope to compete against two professional wrestlers?

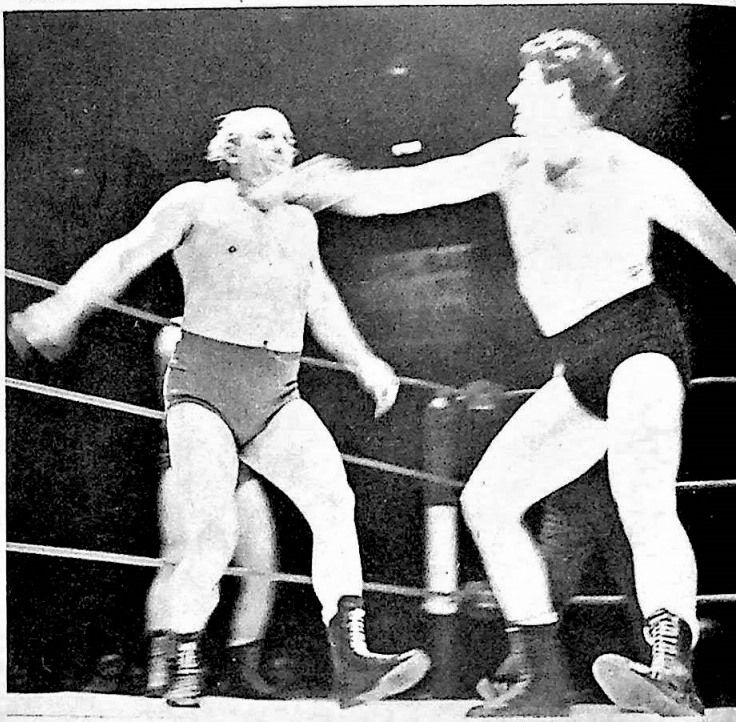
She soon found out. For what happened in the next forty minutes proved to be the wildest bout yet seen in a Cleveland ring. The Gallaghers were at their roughest—and for awhile, at least, Brazil and Layton tried to stay within the limits of legality and fair play. It proved to be impossible, however. In order to gain the second fall, they resorted to the same tactics as the Gallaghers. Only more so. It was a shock to see upright-living nice guy Brazil suddenly tear into Doc Gallagher with an attack that Jerry Graham himself would have envied. And when the statuesque Lord Layton took off on Mike, rich, red Irish blood began to flow!

The Gallaghers won. Not because they defeated Layton-Brazil, but because the heroic twain were disqualified, of all things! They had practically won—but so enraged had they become, that they continued to punish their beefy victims after the referee warned them to stop. When Layton, by now berserk with rage, continued to pummel Mike Gallagher unmercifully, the referee disqualified both he and his partner, Brazil.

But it wasn't over yet. When the Gallaghers attempted to reach their dressing room, the fans mobbed them. Police had their hands full, trying to save the Brothers. But the crowd was determined to finish what Layton and Bobo had started. Before the Gallaghers managed to get behind the locked door of their dressing room, vengeance for Lord Athol Layton had been achieved by the public.

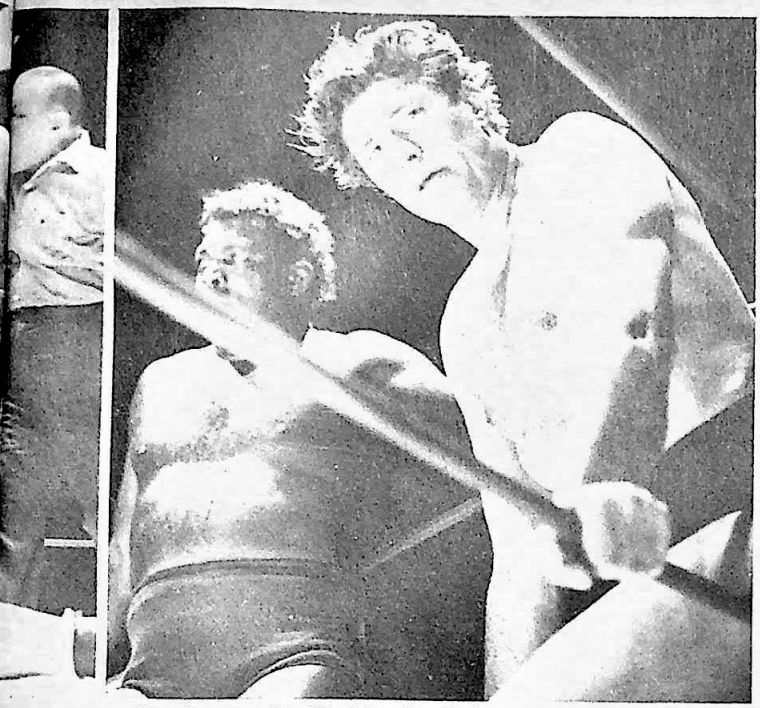


The Gallaghers, Mike, left, and Doc, ganged up on Layton at every opportunity. Here Doc yanks his hair while Mike gets set to kick him in the stomach. The referee forced Gallaghers to break hold.

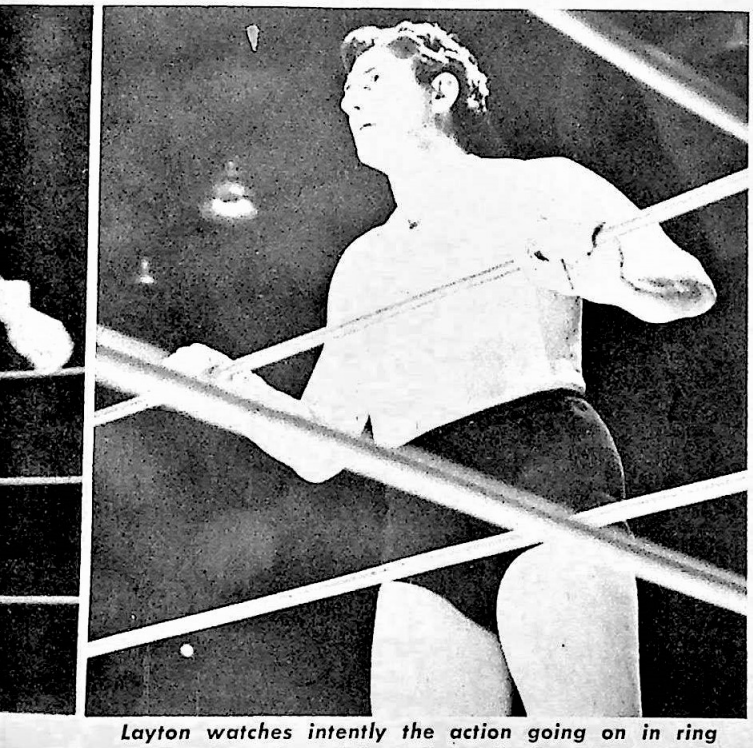


Layton aims Judo blow at Doc Gallagher's throat, stopping him dead in his tracks. Layton has a vast knowledge of Jiu-Jitsu and Judo which he learned while wrestling in the Orient.

As for the brand new wrestling fan, she proudly displayed a long, revealing rip in her brand new blouse, obtained when she swung at Mike Gallagher as he retreated past her aisle seat. In the newspaper account of the fracas next morning, she learned more about Lord Layton, and why he was more than able to take care of



Handsome, dignified Lord Athol Layton rests between falls of bout against Gallagher brothers. Alongside him is his tag team partner, popular Bobo Brazil.



Layton watches intently the action going on in ring as Brazil is slugged by Mike Gallagher. When Brazil finally made tag, Layton made Mike run for cover.

himself against the fierce Gallaghers.

Athol Layton was a youth when an uncle died, leaving him a fancy title and little else. The estate was heavy with both ivy and taxes, and the title didn't earn Athol a single slice of bread. In order to keep living, he had to keep eating just like anyone else—which meant he had to go to work. Or to sea. Eventually he wound up in Australia. It was 1941 and the war was on—so young Athol found himself in the Australian army, stationed in the Near East. It was there that he first prepared himself for his career, not as a TV commentator, but as a wrestler. And he did it by first becoming a boxer.

The young giant, already full grown at 270 pounds, knocked out 19 opponents and had 23 consecutive wins. Eventually he proved too discouraging for other heavyweights, which made him a fighter without anyone to fight.

After his discharge, he took up wrestling because it seemed the natural thing to do. There he found a friendlier atmosphere and plenty of opponents. And plenty of money to pay off his debt-ridden estate back home.

It was in Asia that the young wrestler learned his craft. There he went up against Chinese, Indian and Siberian mat men who introduced him to every trick in the international book.

He learned a few more unorthodox tricks from the bandits who terrorized the country through which he campaigned. More than once, homemade bombs were hurled into the ring, and once a bomb exploded only a few feet from him. It proved to be a sputtering affair, luckily, and merely scared hell out of the sweating nobleman. And going from one ring to another was no milk run, either, for an armed Jeep had to accompany his car, and his own driver was armed with an automatic. It was an exciting life.

Layton was a natural for American and Canadian wrestling rings. In 1952 he arrived in Canada filled with ambition and a burning determination to succeed. Since then, the story of Lord Athol Layton has been a success story all the way. He plowed through the stars of North American wrestling like a baler through a stack of hay, leaving their maimed carcasses stacked in neat rows from Toronto to Chicago.

He teamed with fellow British nobleman Lord Blears to form an almost unbeatable combination. The money poured in and for the first time in his life, Layton was liquid, financially, that is.

In 1959, the cultural background and personal desires of Lord Layton got in the way of his success as a wrestler. He "began looking around," as they say. He looked as far as Cleveland where, he understood, promoter Pedro Martinez was looking for a ringside announcer for his WJW-TV outlet. Layton put in a phone call to Martinez. Pedro got one earful of that British accent—and, knowing that it came from a man who knew wrestling, he realized his search was over.

The Lord Layton of today seems to be well established in his new spot beneath the ring apron. He keeps in training, too, for Mike Gallagher was only the first of several angry villains who challenged his outspoken opinions of them. He is a stickler for fair play and wrestling-as-it-should-be, and doesn't mind saying so in public.

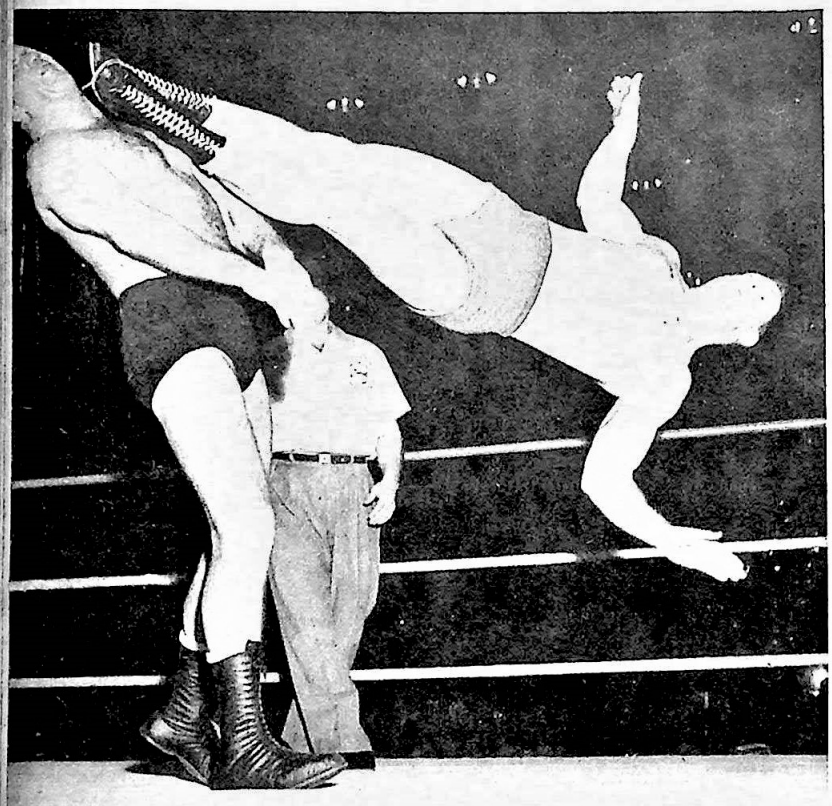
All in all, it promises to be an exciting new career for the big man with the big title. Almost as exciting as dodging bandit bombs in Singapore, or wrestling a 300 pound Hindu in the Himalayas.

As for the brand new wrestling fan who fell in love with an announcer and deeper in love with a wrestler—she had her heart broken. She wrote Lord Layton a long heartfelt letter expressing her love. He sent her back an autographed picture of himself—with his lovely wife and two sons, ages 6 and 16.

It's all right though—she saw a picture of baby-face Mark Lewin in an old issue of BOXING ILLUSTRATED. And Markie is single! • *end*

Official
WRESTLING RATINGS

A poll of leading promoters, newsmen and the wrestlers themselves guided us in compiling these ratings.



PAT O'CONNOR DROP KICKS BEN SHARPE

JUDY GRABLE RIDES RITA CORTEZ

MALE	FEMALE	TAG TEAMS
1 – PAT O'CONNOR	1 – JUNE BYERS	1 – THE BASTIEN BROTHERS
2 – KILLER KOWALSKI	2 – JUDY GRABLE	2 – ANTONINO ROCCA & MIGUEL PEREZ
3 – ANTONINO ROCCA	3 – LORRAINE JOHNSON	3 – THE SHIRE BROTHERS
4 – LOU THESZ	4 – TONA TOMAH	4 – TINY MILLS & STAN KOWALSKI
5 – EDOUARD CARPENTIER	5 – ROSE ROMAN	5 – THE KANGAROOS
6 – DON EAGLE	6 – KATHY STARR	6 – THE GALLAGHER BROTHERS
7 – BUDDY ROGERS	7 – BARBARA BAKER	7 – THE KALMIKOFF BROTHERS
8 – DICK HUTTON	8 – LEE CHONA LaCLAIRE	8 – THE TOLOS BROTHERS
9 – DON LEO JONATHAN	9 – FABULOUS MOOLAH	9 – THE MILLER BROTHERS
10 – GENE KINISKI	10 – BELLE STARR	10 – THE SHARPE BROTHERS

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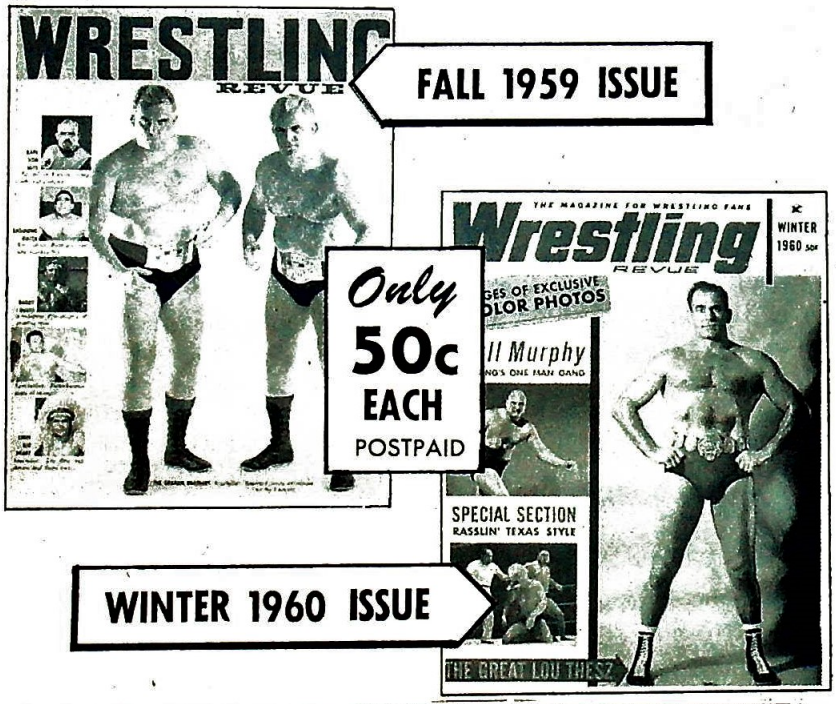

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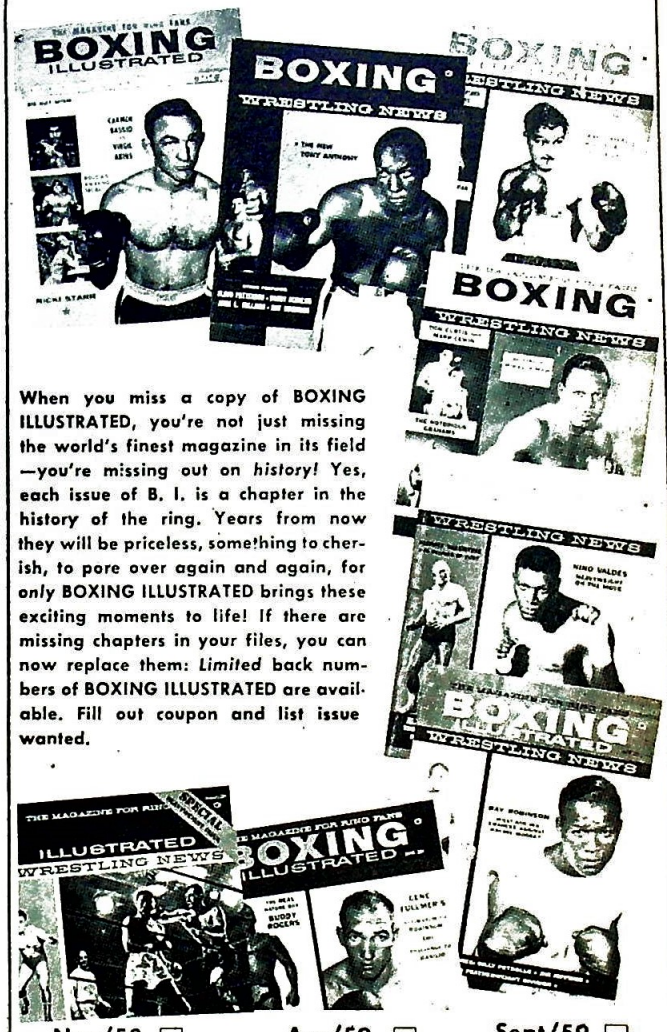

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From an island in the mid-Pacific comes one of wrestling's most exciting and colorful personalities

PRINCE MAIAVA

Tiger on the loose

BY LEE LORENZ

IN SOME PARTS of the Japanese Empire, to this day, they tell of that awful day when Prince Maiava, the Samoan chief, ran amok. It happened near the end of the Solomon Islands campaign, during World War II, and survivors of the affair sometimes wake in the middle of the night, screaming, after reliving one frightful hour of terror:

The American planes had made things rough for the Japanese who held the Solomons. The High Command had all but made up its mind to withdraw. Expecting an invasion momentarily, they doubled the jungle guard and passed out extra ammo. When night fell, everbody was jittery and on edge.

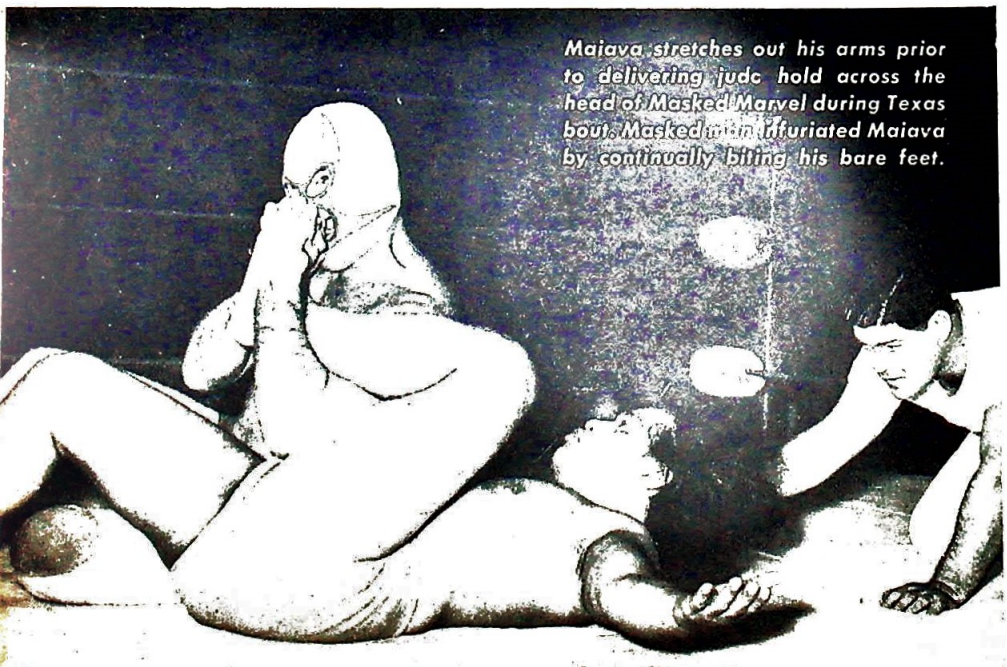
Jap sergeant Omato, in charge of the headquarter's guard, never knew what hit him. Suddenly, he was aware only of a silent, deadly shape that stole up on him and struck his Adam's apple with a lethal judo blow. Omato strangled to death.

Corporal Ahitamikamo had a better view of the thing that killed him. It was a huge, naked man with wild frizzled hair and a fierce expression in his dark eyes. At his side hung a sharp-edged bolo. The corporal died of a broken neck when the fierce man seized his throat and jerked back his head, breaking his neck.

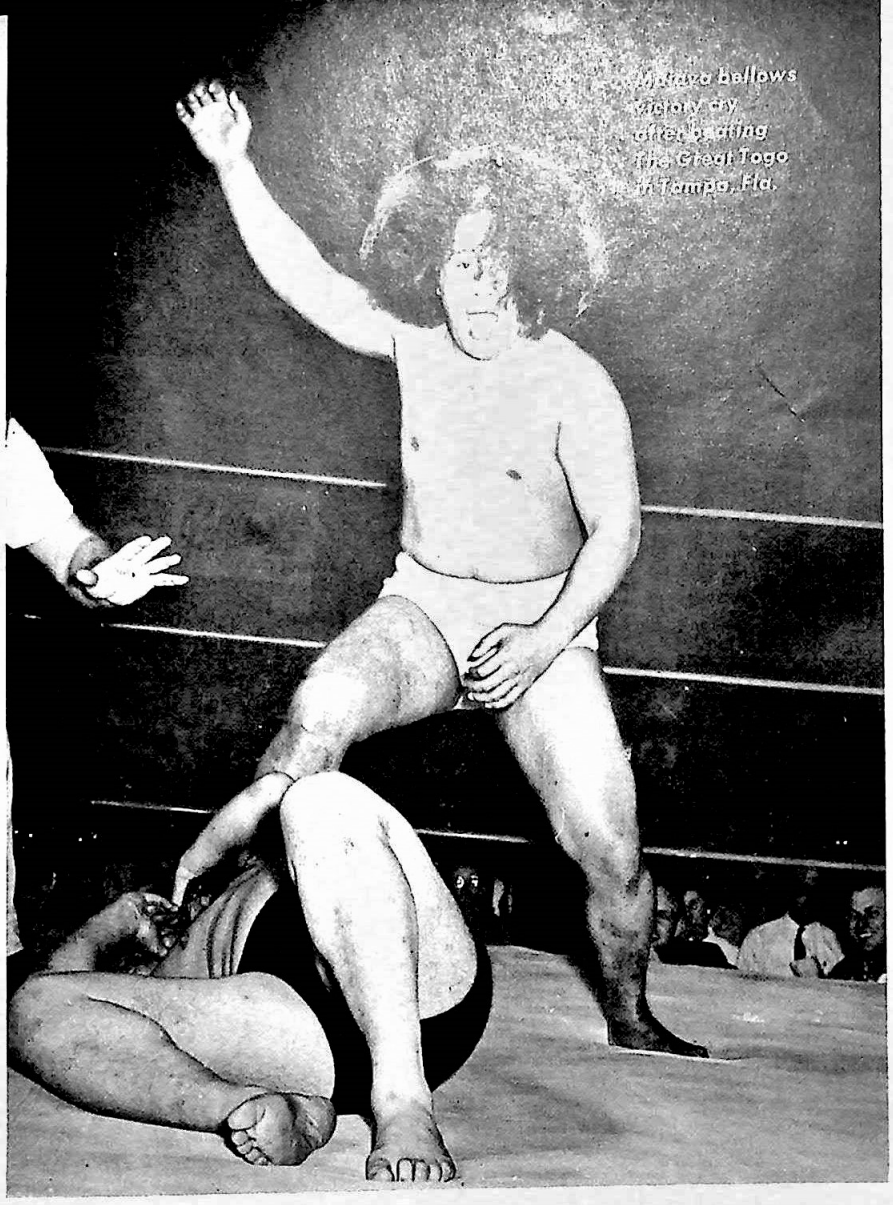
The third victim was Lt. Sumosumata, who didn't quite die. He survived to tell his children all about it. He saw the big man drop on him from a tree limb, and then he felt a paralyzing blow on the back of his neck. He was conscious but helpless. Lying on the ground with a broken neck, he watched the naked man—who appeared to be a local islander—steal over to the command post. The Jap lieutenant then tried to cry out, but couldn't. He could only watch while the big islander held four hand grenades—taken from the dead guards—pulled the pins, and hurled them into the headquarters building.

Four thunderous explosions, sounding as one, blew out all the windows and the door. Parts of bodies, file cabinets and typewriters burst from the place in a bloody cascade.

The big naked man gave a loud cry—it rang in the lieutenant's memory for seventeen long years—and then, as subtly as the night, vanished into the jungle. Even as hundreds of Jap soldiers, startled into terrified wakefulness, sprang into action. Pouring into the clearing, they



Maiava stretches out his arms prior to delivering judo hold across the head of Masked Marvel during Texas bout. Masked man infuriated Maiava by continually biting his bare feet.



were prepared for a full-scale invasion. Seeing the wrecked building and the bodies lying about, they were sure of it. All Japanese troops on the island were immediately alerted.

Lt. Sumo-sumata was the only one to get a good look at the one-man invasion, that night. Everyone else who saw the strange, dark man was dead. Including six men from a battalion H.Q. three miles away on the other side of the island. There the pattern was the same. The silent approach to the guards. The strangling, the judo blows from the darkness, and the stolen hand grenades made a shambles of the command building.

Altogether, fifteen men died that night, and two were wounded seriously. Four buildings were demolished and so was one small aircraft. So bad were the jitters caused by the terrible raid that this particular island was abandoned by the Japanese invaders two days later. Not long after the Americans moved in and took the Solomons.

The one-man army was actually a U.S. Marine commando named Maiava, who knew the islands better than anybody in the whole U.S. military establishment.

Today, fifteen years later, Maiava is still a commando. He looks the same as he did then, except that a square foot of clothing covers certain parts of his muscular body. The big difference is that now the Prince doesn't kill anybody. In fact, after the combat, he is likely to buy his dazed victim a drink.

For the Jap-killer of the Solomons had become a big-time wrestler whose job it was to thrill rather than to kill. Since that first eventful night of his debut at the Hollywood Legion Stadium, much has been said and written about Prince Maiava. A lot of it is myth. But one thing is sure—the fiction can't come near matching the truth!

They say he's a Fiji Islander. This is false. Even anyone with a slight knowledge of geography knows that the Fiji folk are as dusky as African Sudanese. Maiava is obviously a Polynesian, with warm-hued skin and Indian features.

They say he is ferocious as a Borneo wildman, who speaks pidgin English and lights matches on his bare feet. This is nonsense. The Prince is well read, educated and owns a Zippo lighter.

They say he's the toughest, most colorful, hair-raising wrestler since the original Masked Marvel. This is *true*. As anyone who sees him in the ring will agree. Maiava combines all of the qualities that make for stardom. He has the aforementioned "color"; he has a flair for showmanship that takes a back seat to nobody, including Buddy Rogers, Gorgeous George and Ricky Starr; and he can wrestle!

With a definite and sure knowledge of the science, Maiava adds tricks to his routines that you usually see only in the Orient. Plus strictly Maiavan innovations. In his American debut, for instance, the Prince didn't waste time getting his hands dirty. Or even his feet. He merely walked up to his opponent (they call them "victims" when they meet Maiava) and slammed him across the bridge of the nose—with his head! Said victim collapsed and stayed that way for the next ten minutes. The various commissions are still trying to decide if such a "hold" is legal or not; meanwhile, Prince Maiava has gone on to freeze about a dozen more unfortunates using the same method.

He beats them in other ways, too. More normal ways. He slammed the Mighty Zuma so hard that the "Miniature Rocca" still bounces in his sleep. He takes on the big ones, too. Skull Murphy, the "One-Man Gang," got his fill of Maiava when the Hawaiian proved impervious to all the Murphy Skull-druggery.

Even though the audience may not know about Maiava's heroic war background, they still sense his hero qualities, and cheer him accordingly. The man has an aura of dignity and splendor about him that makes you want him to win, no matter who he's wrestling. Generally he does win.

Civilized though Maiava may be, he still has his pet peeves, and they concern the things that go to make up civilization. Mainly clothes. He hates to wear them. In an interview

at his New York hotel, the Prince openly defied convention by parading around in his shorts. "This is more natural," he sneered. "Why people up here wear clothes in the summer, and sweat their life's blood away, I'll never understand. They go to the beaches and take their clothes off and get comfortable—for the day. Then they come back to the city where it's even hotter—and put on all those clothes! They say the Islanders are backwards; but if you can prove to me that civilized people are smarter, I'll buy the next round of drinks."

We couldn't prove it, but Maiava bought the next round anyway. As we talked, he stalked the length of the room like a lithe jungle beast, which is his ring trademark. We could almost see him, back in the green forests of the Fiji Islands, silently stealing from shadow to shadow, unseen, unheard.

We asked him how he came to get into the wrestling business—and how did he get all the way to New York.

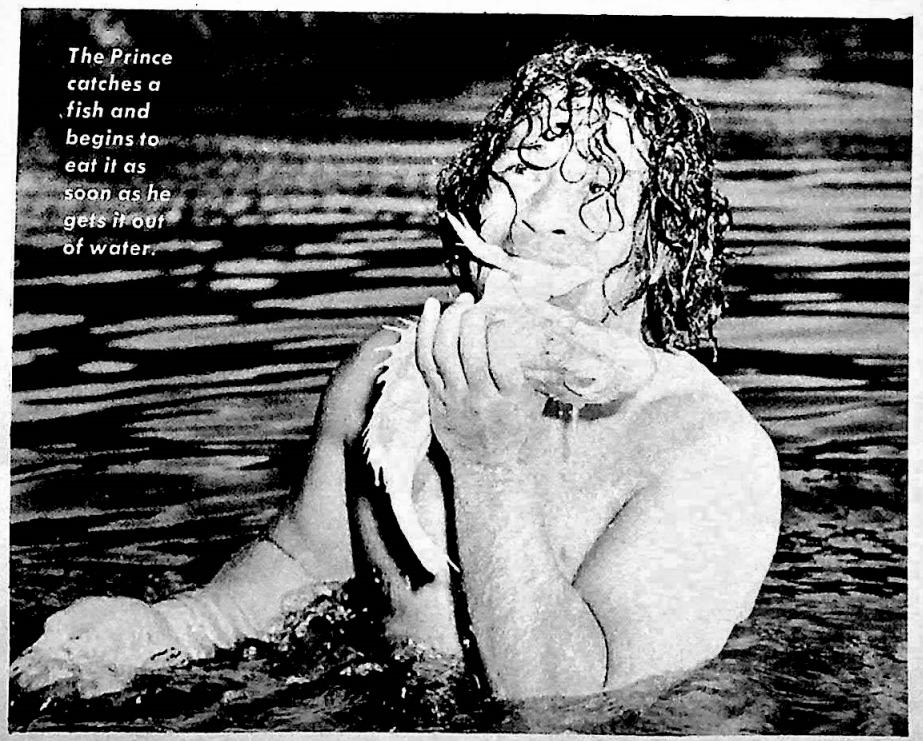
"I was doing a so-called 'native' dance in the Fijis, after the war," said the Prince. "Since I could wrestle pretty well for an amateur, some of the local boys challenged me. I tossed them all into the dust, one by one—and sometimes two by two. Well, it happened that a couple of tourists were taking it all in. Professional wrestlers named Fritz and Hans Schnabel. And that's all there was to it."

It's hard to say how far such a star will go. Many fans still think of Prince Maiava as another freak, even though it's obvious that he can wrestle, has the guts of a Medal of Honor winner, and is as strong as a Philippine bullock.

Some people are hard to convince. After talking with him and watching him work, our opinion is unreserved: After seven years in the big time, Prince Maiava is doing it his own way, in his own time. He has a good thing going for himself and why change it? If they ever get around to having genuine championship matches, one of the top contenders will be the killer hero of the Solomons, Prince Maiava. Meanwhile, see him in action if you can. Enjoy his superb brand of exciting wrestling.

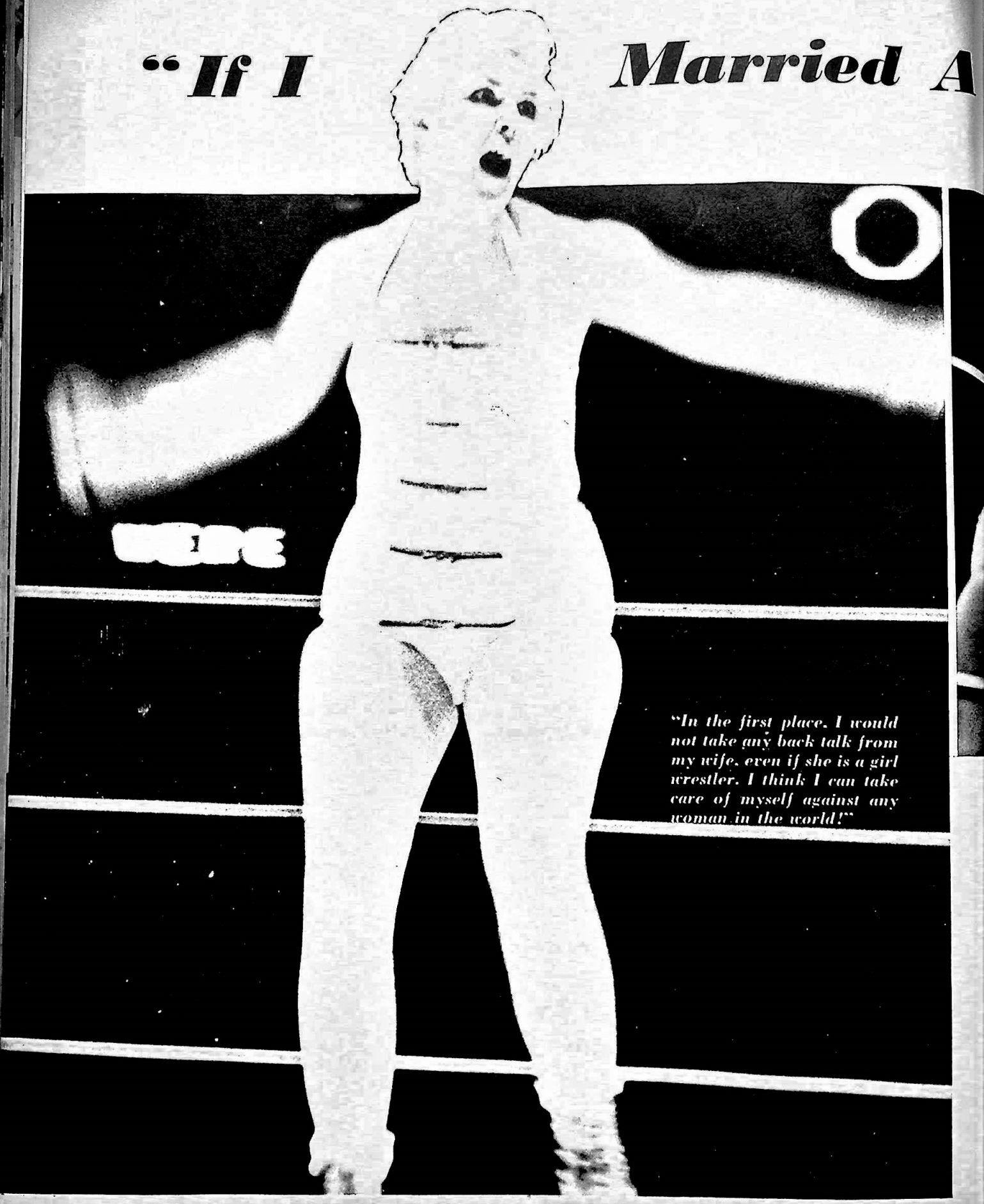
And, if you can, imagine him as he was on that dark Pacific night so long ago, when he was the sleek jungle beast that struck terror into hundreds of Japanese soldiers. • *end*

Prince Maiava decked out in royal headdress makes fierce picture



The Prince catches a fish and begins to eat it as soon as he gets it out of water.

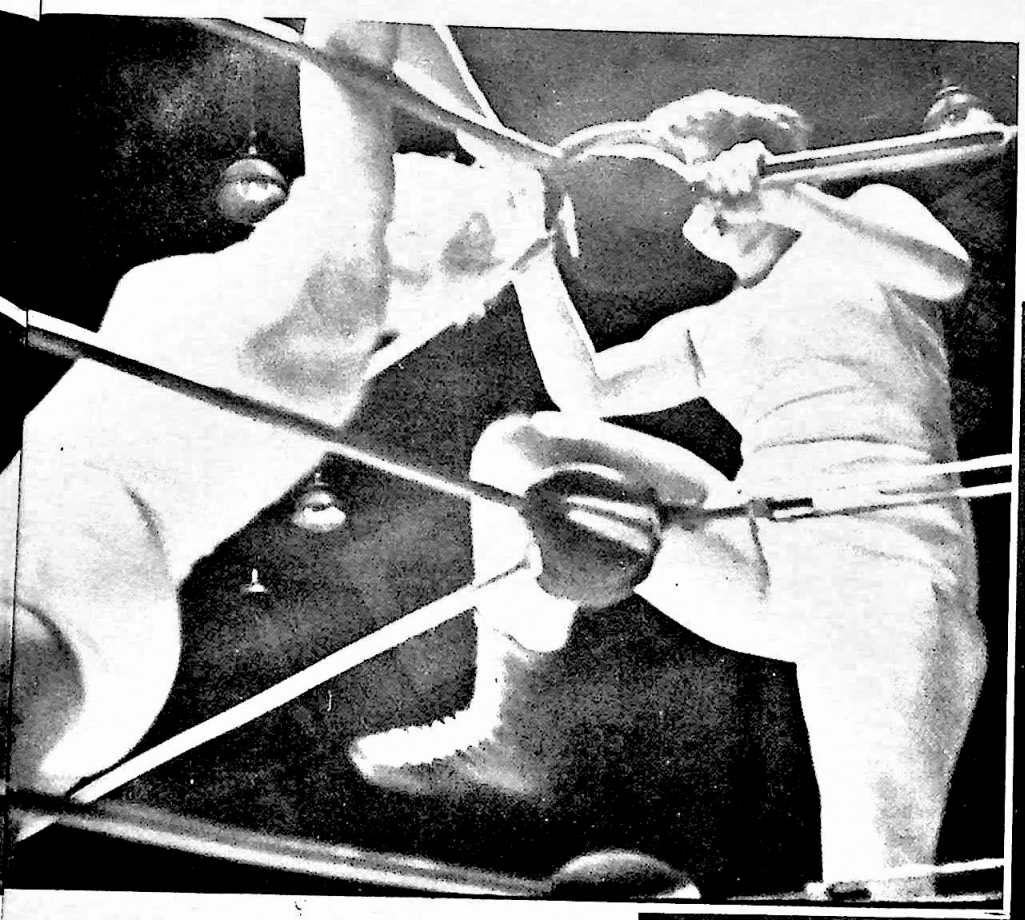
"If I Married A



"In the first place, I would not take any back talk from my wife, even if she is a girl wrestler. I think I can take care of myself against any woman in the world!"

ELAINE ELLIS LOOKS LIKE A FLUTTERING BUTTERFLY AS SHE GETS SET TO STRIKE.

Girl Wrestler"



BETTY CLARK ABOUT TO DIG HER KNEE INTO ELAINE ELLIS'S BACK AS THE LATTER GOES SAILING INTO THE CORNER.

MAE WESTON HOLDS HAMMERLOCK AS BETTY CLARK TRIES DESPERATELY TO BREAK FREE.

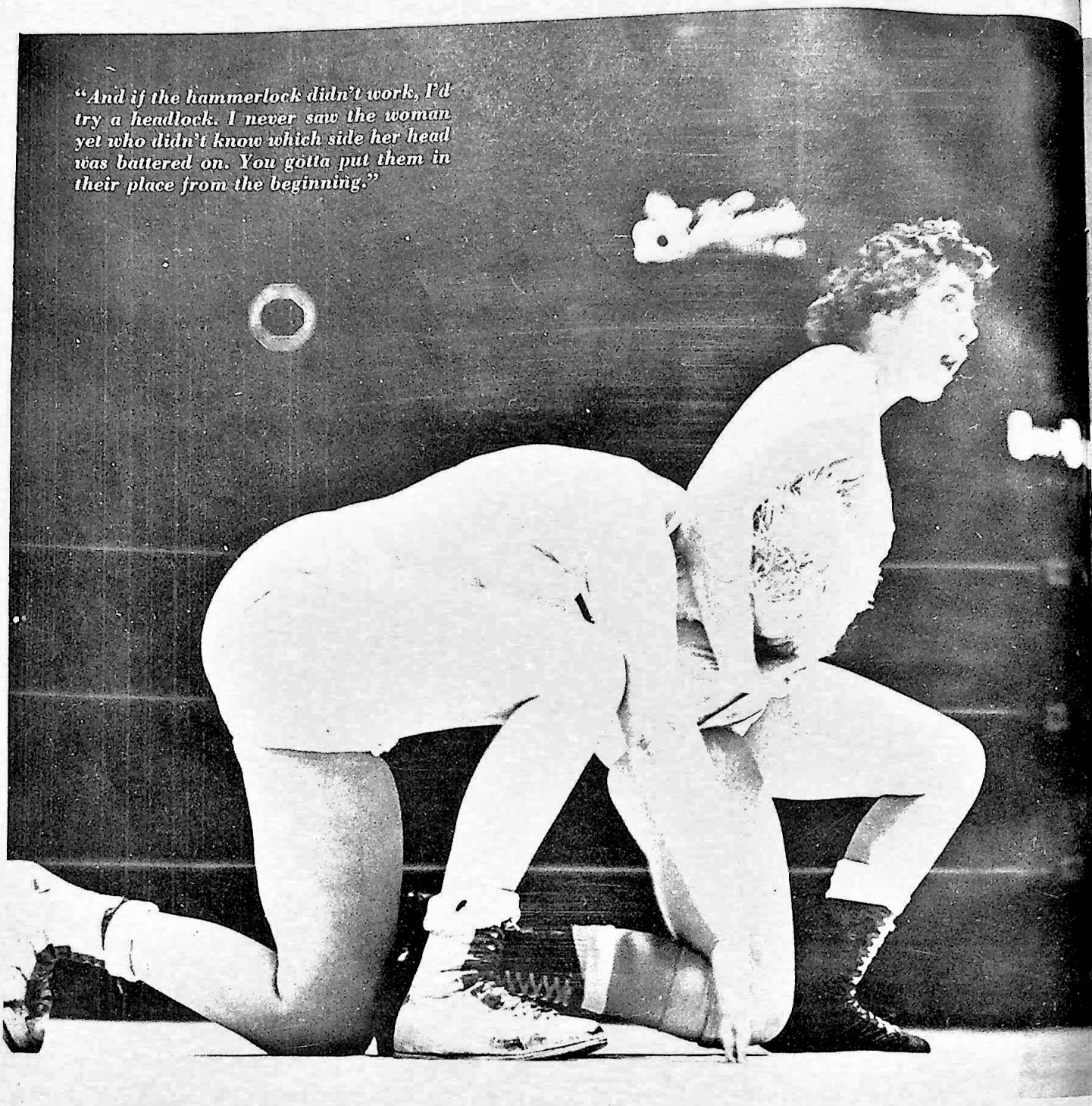
"If she got tough with me, I'd give her a whack on the fanny first. . . ."

ONE EVENING LAST JUNE, in Akron, Ohio, your reporter was talking to a young bachelor who said that he was shopping around for a wife. The question which immediately came to my mind was, "Would you marry a girl wrestler?"

James D. Bennett of Akron, a construction worker, said he would, if he thought she would make him a good wife. Meanwhile, as the conversation continued, one of the most spine-tingling, hair-pullingest girl wrestling matches ever staged in

(continued on next page)

"Then, if she didn't behave, I'd put a hammerlock on her until she yelled uncle. I can wrestle a little myself, you know."

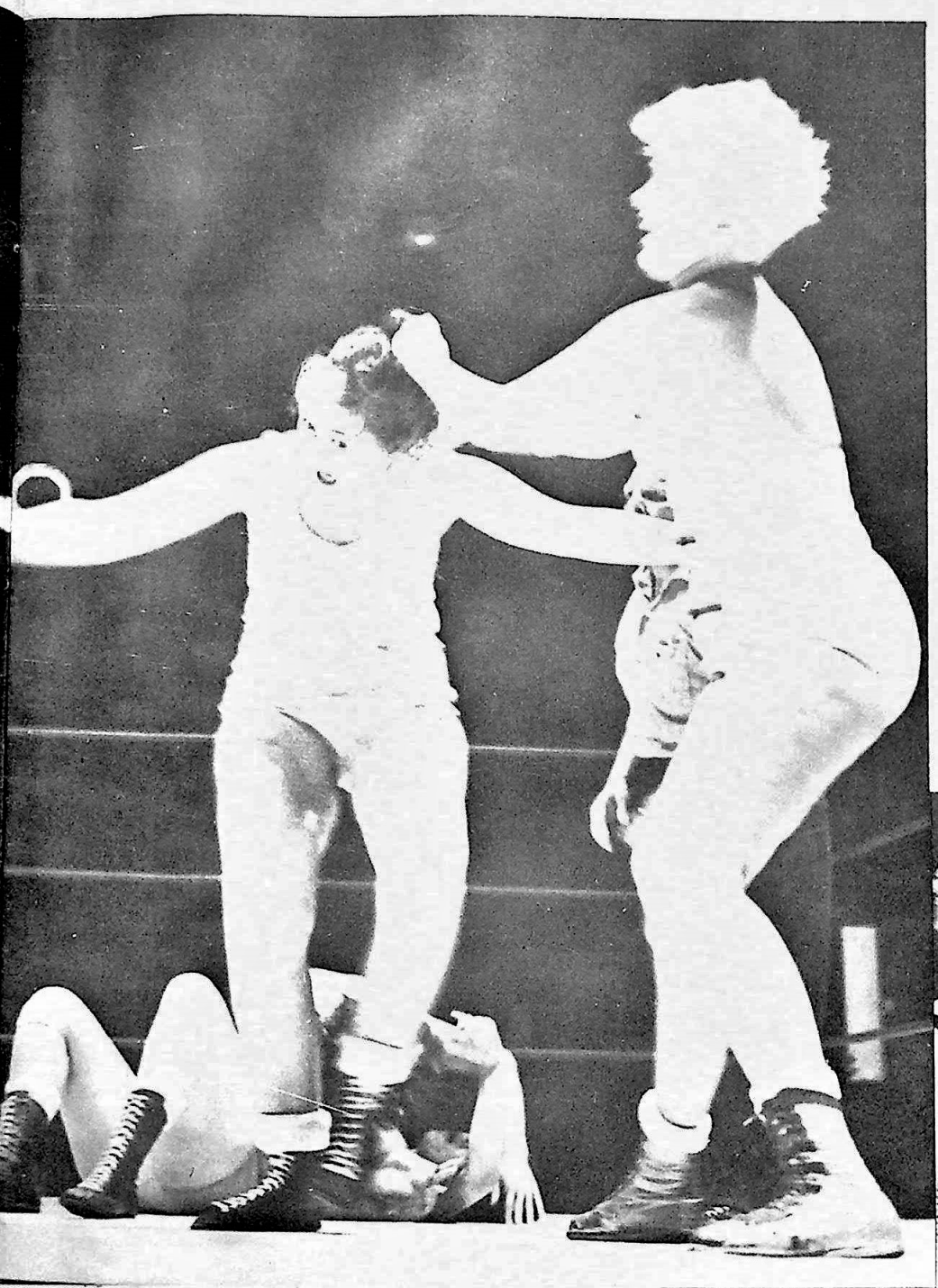


BETTY CLARK HOLDS ELAINE ELLIS IN HEADLOCK

Akron was taking place just a few feet away. The participants were Mae Weston, an old veteran; Elaine Ellis, a good looking platinum blond; Mary Hillis, a tough elbow-smasher, and Betty Clark, a trigger-tempered native of West Virginia. It was, of course, a tag team match, with Weston and Ellis, the "good" girls, versus Hillis and Clark, the "bad" girls.

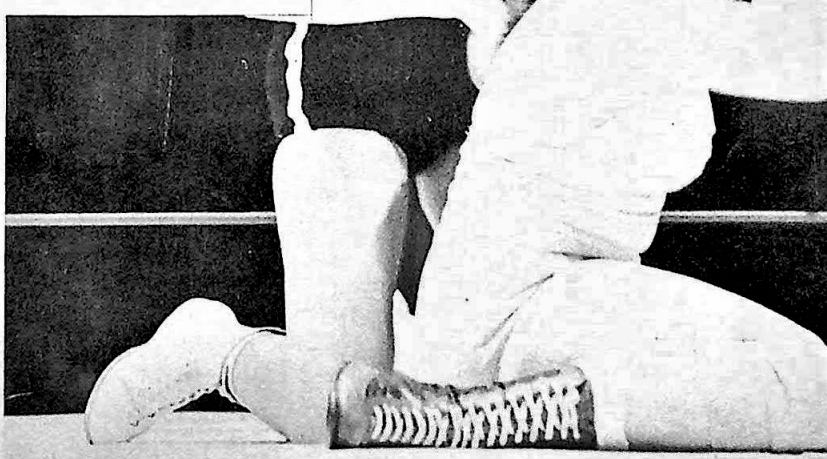
Even as they entered the ring the girls were snarling at each other. It was later learned that an incident had occurred in the dressing room between Ellis and Clark. When Weston tried to intercede, she promptly got a spike heel in the groin. This so enraged Mae's partner, Elaine Ellis, that she slugged Clark in the mouth. At this point, 300-pound promoter Pedro Martinez stepped between the maze of cursing, struggling females, ordered them to stop and "save the rough stuff for the cash customers waiting out front."

As the "official" bout progressed, so did the conversation with wife-seeker Jim Bennett. "How would you treat her—if you married a girl wrestler?" Mr. Bennett's answers appear with the picture captions on these pages.



"So what if she did try to pull out my hair by the roots? I've been around for a few years myself — with dames."

". . . I'd twist her arm around behind her back if she didn't quiet down. I'm mean when I get mad. And I'm strong, too!"



ELAINE ELLIS JERKS MARY HILLIS BY THE HAIR, PULLING HER OFF MAE WESTON WHO IS LAYING ON THE CANVAS.

BETTY CLARK SCREAMS IN PAIN AS MAE WESTON BENDS HER ARM TO THE BREAKING POINT.

(continued on next page)

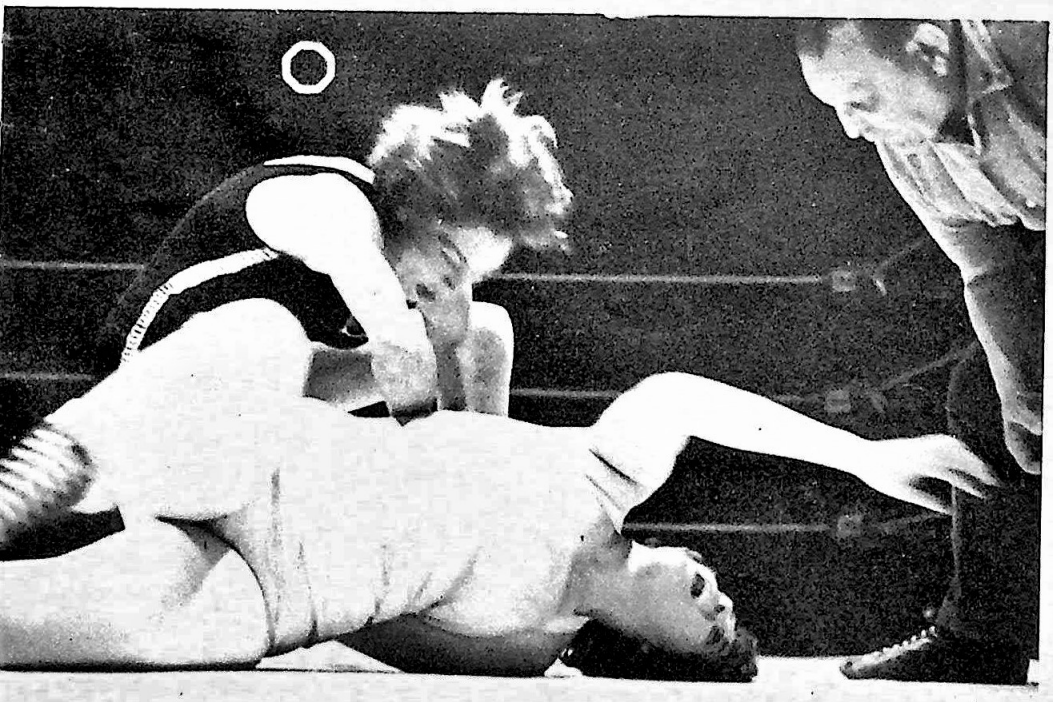
"As a matter of fact, I'm tough enough to take on any two women, at the same time, no matter who they are. It's simply a matter of self-confidence and determination."

BETTY CLARK, BACK TO CAMERA, STALKS MAE WESTON, IN BLACK SUIT, AND HER PARTNER, ELAINE ELLIS.

". . But, come to think of it, you've got to admit that these girl wrestlers are pretty rough babies, at that."

MAE WESTON CAUGHT IN STEP-OVER TOEHOLD BY MARY HILLIS.

"Why I'd even let her slug me on the chin, if it was absolutely necessary. I like it when a woman tries to fight back. It shows spunk."



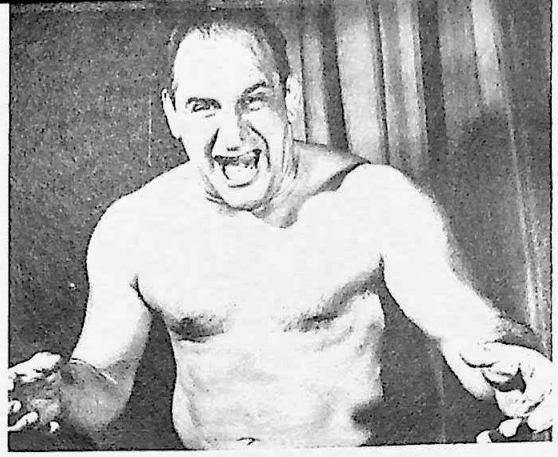
BETTY CLARK, LEFT, IS STAGGERED BY ELAINE ELLIS' RIGHT. MAE WESTON IS DOWN AT LEFT, WHILE THE REFEREE COMES TO HER AID.

"Look, I've thought it over. I'm going to marry some sweet little blonde secretary. Better still, I think I'll stay single!"

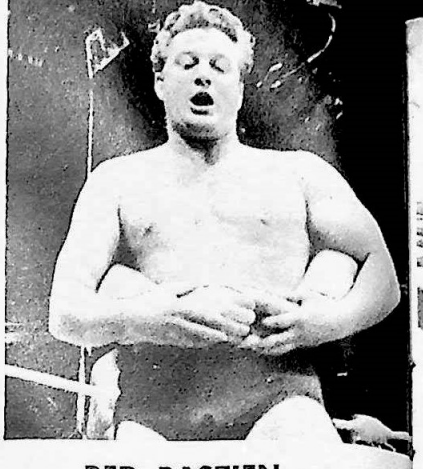
END OF MATCH CAME WHEN BETTY CLARK, DOWN, COULD NO LONGER BEAR PAIN OF MAE WESTON'S HAMMERLOCK AND GAVE UP.

SPECIAL SECTION

WRESTLING REVUE CHECKS OUT THE STATE OF MICHIGAN



LARRY CHENE



RED BASTIEN

Detroit promoters have long boasted that their brand of wrestling is the best in the U.S. A team of WRESTLING REVUE reporters and photographers went to Michigan to see for themselves. Here are their observations in words and photos.

BY HAL HENNESEY

IT WAS MORE THAN SIX months ago when the telegram arrived at WRESTLING REVUE'S New York City offices. It read: "IF YOU WANT TO SEE THE BEST WRESTLING IN THE UNITED STATES COME TO MICHIGAN." signed: "BERT RUBY, PROMOTER."

WRESTLING REVUE reporters and photographers didn't drop their typewriters and cameras and dash for the next Michigan-bound plane. Communications like that flow steadily into our New York mill. In order to bring our readers first-hand coverage of the best wrestling in the world, we put Detroit on our list of places to visit.

Early last June, Detroit became next on the list. One hot, muggy morning, Publisher Stanley Weston, two photographers and this writer boarded an American Airlines Jetprop Electra at New York's Idlewild Airport for the one hour and fifteen minute flight to the motor city on the shores of Lake Erie. Exactly twelve hours later WRESTLING REVUE'S team rendered a unanimous decision: Michigan *does* have some of the best, if not *the* best, wrestling in the U.S.

What caused this decision was an afternoon wrestling show originating from Detroit's WXYZ-TV, and that same evening a show in Flint, Michigan, some 60 miles north of Detroit. But let's look at our Detroit trip in chronological order.

We checked into the Eddystone Hotel, which also houses Bert Ruby's headquarters. The lobby of the Eddystone, on wrestling days, is something to behold. Probably not since Roman Circus days, with its gladiatorial contents, has so much muscle been gathered in such a small space. Imagine, if you can, this sight: the Bastiens, Red and Lou; Ricky Cortez; Jim Hady; the Mighty Thor; Larry Chene; The Brute, Bad Boy Brown; George MacArthur; Tim Hampton; Dick Garza and Ali Bey—all in one room! That's just about a ton-and-a-half of top grade wrestlers.

About 2000 pounds of it were due at the TV studios for the four o'clock television show. This weekly program is one of the most popular in Michigan, topping many of the big network broadcasts with a whopping 14.7 rating. It's easy to see why.

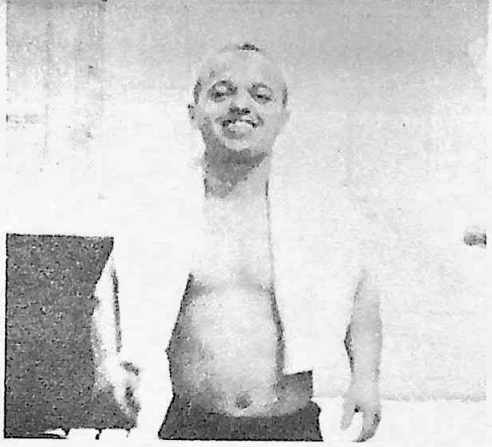
The headliners were the Bastien Brothers, preceded by the sensational Larry Chene who came home to Detroit six months ago for Christmas and is still there. WRESTLING REVUE'S team prepared to watch a routine wrestling show, settled back in ringside seats, our jaded eyelids at half mast.

We perked up in a hurry. First thing we saw was a fabulously built Mexican, with blood spouting from a deep gash in his forehead, blindly groping toward his opponent after a wild exchange of holds, kicking, gouging and tossing—he found him, too, and hurled him—Lee Coy—out of the ring. Coy, looking somewhat ill, was removed from the premises on a stretcher.

Responding to the catcalls and jeers of the audience, which had learned to hate him, the huge dark villain stalked arrogantly about the ring apron; somewhat the worse for wear and half blind, he returned the hatred of the crowd. His name was Ricky Cortez and he had even *us* detesting his guts!

Although his bout was over, Cortez continued to haunt the studio auditorium. Meanwhile, Larry Chene, a pocket-sized Rocca, appeared. As they passed one another, Cortez made a swipe at his sworn enemy, Chene, having bested him in previous matches. Chene didn't hesitate—he closed with Cortez and right there in the center of the hard oak floor took place an impromptu bout that was as exciting as anything I'd seen in the ring. With the TV cameras catching

THE BRUTE



BERNIE BURKE

RICKY CORTEZ

it all.

Chene gave Cortez a rough time. It might be said in Cortez' defense however, that he was only half conscious from his bout with the ring post a few minutes earlier. And he offered no excuses. Eventually he was coaxed back to the dressing room and the next bout went on.

During the hour-long show, we must confess that, for the first time in many years of wrestling-watching, we really enjoyed wrestling the way the true fans enjoy it. Larry Chene, as we say elsewhere in this issue, is sure to be a national star, and so is Ricky Cortez. When Chene started prancing, leaping and gyrating around the ring, it was like 1947 again, with a young Antonino Rocca making his American debut.

The Bastiens, of course, put on their usual sensational performance, completely laying waste to a couple of Midwesterners who must have thought a tornado had blown into town for them alone. Red and Lou were also the stars of the evening show at Flint.

That evening show—! It's tough to describe the high calibre wrestling we saw there in Flint. The Bastiens, in the main bout, had their work cut out for them, for their foes were 315-pound George MacArthur and a local masked giant billed as The Mighty Thor, at 290. This was a lot of beef for a couple of 220-pounders to upend. But speed and talent will out, as the experienced Bastiens proved again. When the Mighty Thor returned to the dressing room, his mask still intact, a stream of blood flowed from beneath it. He had a bloody nose that didn't stop spouting until long after everyone was dressed and gone.

In another part of this issue, we discuss the strange story of that mysterious monster, "The Brute," and his match with heroic Abe Jacobs. They were first on the program, and they started things off with an eye-opener that had the crowd—and your reporters—in fits.

"This," murmured publisher Weston, following the keynote bout, "is too good to last—they must be doing it for our benefit."

It wasn't and they weren't. It lasted throughout the rest of the evening—and sneak interviews with the fans proved that such wrestling was commonplace in Michigan.

"I seen 'em do better than this two weeks ago," volunteered one ringsider. "I thought Hady and Cortez would kill each other."

We thought they would kill each other that night. After the second fall, Cortez came into the dressing room, bleeding like a stuck hippo because his cut, suffered on the afternoon TV show, had split open again. The police wouldn't let Hady in the room, fearing big trouble. Cortez, like a brooding figure from Olympus, glared at the floor. "Now I'm going up there to destroy him," he said bitterly.

We slipped the word to the cops to be extra cautious; if ever we saw a man with murder in his eyes, Cortez was it. To be awarded the final fall and the match, young Jim Hady had to go through the most stimulating maneuvers we've seen in many a day.

When eleven o'clock came and went, and the blood had coagulated and the customers were trooping happily homeward, that's when we came to our conclusion: There is nothing wrong with wrestling that can't be cured—if it's done the way they're doing it in Michigan.

The three men largely responsible for this refreshing brand of wrestling are Bert Ruby, Jack Britton and Harry Light. These men, former wrestlers themselves, with the scars of their trade in abundance, know wrestlers and wrestling. In addition—and this is what counts—they have integrity.

"We're not altruistic, exactly," said Bert Ruby, "we're in this business to make money. But we figure the better we treat the public, the better they'll treat us. They're not stupid, these people; they know quality when they see it—whether it's in an automobile or a wrestling match. We figure that if Detroit makes the best cars, it should also put on the best wrestling. And we do just that in our opinion."

Both Ruby and Britton go back a long way, although neither is old, physically. They were around during the last of wrestling's "Glory Days," before Ed "Strangler Lewis" retired. They seem to have gotten *young* ideas, instead of getting jaded and tired, like others in their position. As a result, there is a certain sparkle to their promotions that other sections of the country would do well to copy.

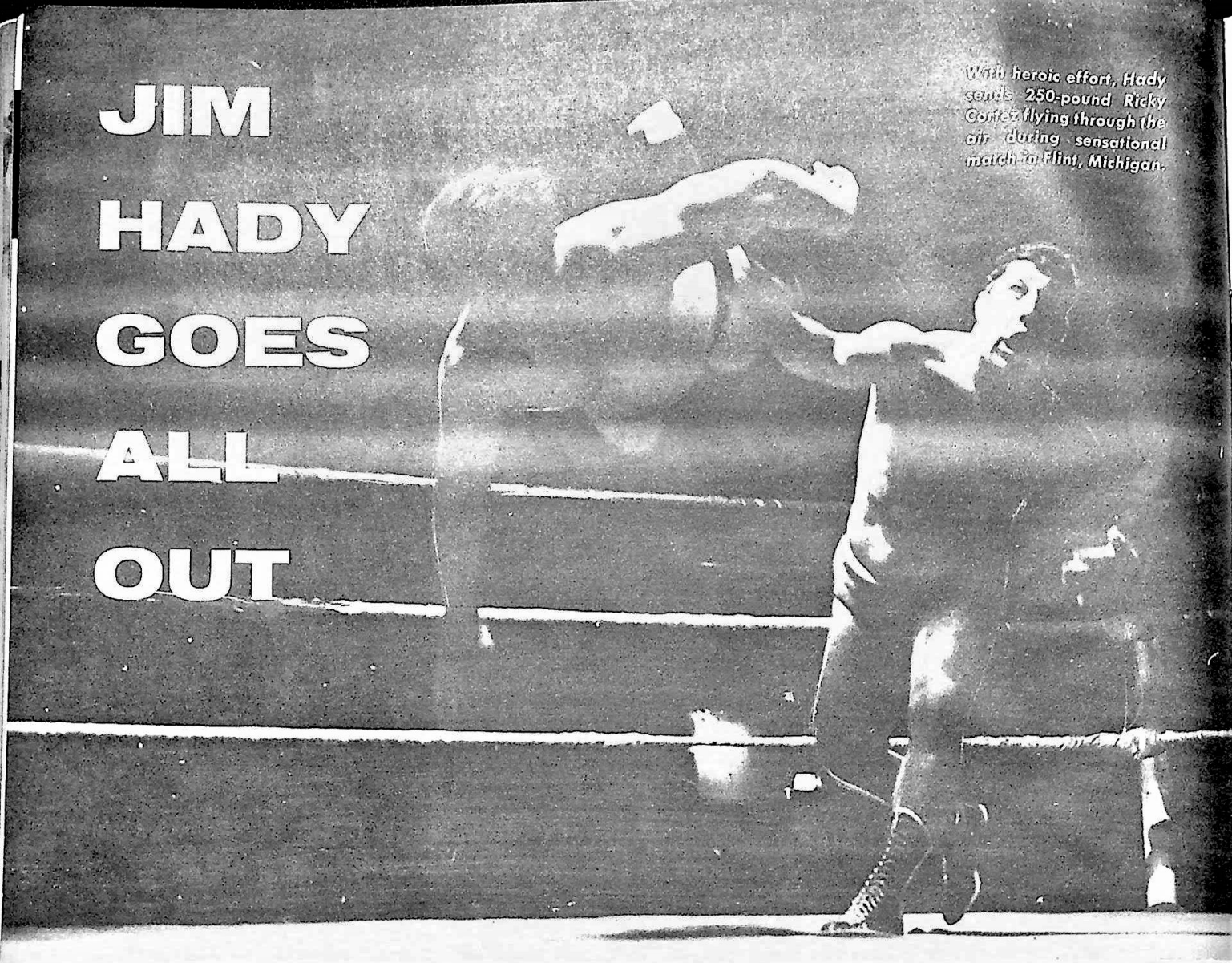
But, as Ruby says, "We couldn't do it without the wrestlers." They have raised most of their boys from pups, having discovered virtually all of the excellent young wrestlers featured on their shows. Both Ruby and Britton travelled all over North America to aggregate their array of talent. They got Cortez in Mexico, Bernard in Canada, Hady in Pittsburgh and, of course, found Larry Chene in their own Detroit backyard.

WRESTLING REVUE learned a lot in Michigan during that one exciting day. Most of all, we learned that the public wants, appreciates, and will pay to see, good wrestling. It's been that way for the past 20,000 years or more—it's not going to change now. But—in these days of stiffer competition, it's got to be exceptionally good wrestling.

The way it is in Michigan.

Take it from there, you other 49 states. • *end*

JIM HADY GOES ALL OUT



With heroic effort, Hady sends 250-pound Ricky Cortez flying through the air during sensational match in Flint, Michigan.

Hady has been a big name around the mid-west for some years. Now he's shooting for national recognition.

BY NORMAN REEM

YOU CAN'T CALL young "Gentlemen" Jim Hady a "wrestler's wrestler," exactly—he's too popular with the fans for that—but he has all of the ingredients that make a wrestler respected and liked among his fellow athletes.

Hady has what it takes to rank him, eventually, with such modern greats as Verne Gagne, Lou Thesz and Pat O'Connor. Yes, this has been said about many a young upstart with muscles, a spectacular style or kangaroo leap. But when it happens, it's usually said by public relations enthusiasts, or by newspaper reporters who've been transferred from the Gardening section just for that one story.

When *we* say it, we mean it. We saw Hady for the first time in Flint, Michigan, recently and rarely have we been more impressed by a newcomer. A newcomer on the national scene, that is; actually, Jim has been wrestling about 10 years. That's long enough to give both his ears the texture and appearance of a couple of ripe prunes, and to give him a mature savvy that is as obvious as his great muscles.

But the know-how and the professional ears can't disguise a refreshing boyishness that is one of Jim's big attractions, insofar as the rock-'n-roll set is concerned. It appeals to the ever-growing audience of mothers, young and old, too. Although built like a segment of the Maginot Line, Hady is short—about 5-9—adding to his youthful look. That framework is covered by 220 pounds of beef that is rock-hard even in repose.

Probably the most impressive of all Hady's physical features is his neck. I rode in the back seat of the car that took Hady and promoter Jack Britton to and from the Flint free-for-all. Jim sat in front. At such close range the Hady neck looks like one of the Pillars of Hercules—a 20-inch pillar. With the help of the neck, Jim performs one of Jim Londo's old specialties—a wrestler's bridge. That is, when a man is in danger of being pinned, he arches his back, weight resting on feet

and neck, thus raising his shoulders up off the canvas—along with the man on top of him. Hady does it easily with a 250-pound man.

"I built up my neck this way," says Jim. "I wanted to be able to duplicate Londos, who could bridge with a *350-pound* man on top of him."

There are a couple of other things Jim wants to do—more important things. One of them is a strong link with his childhood and may be the most important clue to the enigma of Jim Hady.

He wants to fly. "I've wanted to fly ever since Pittsburgh."

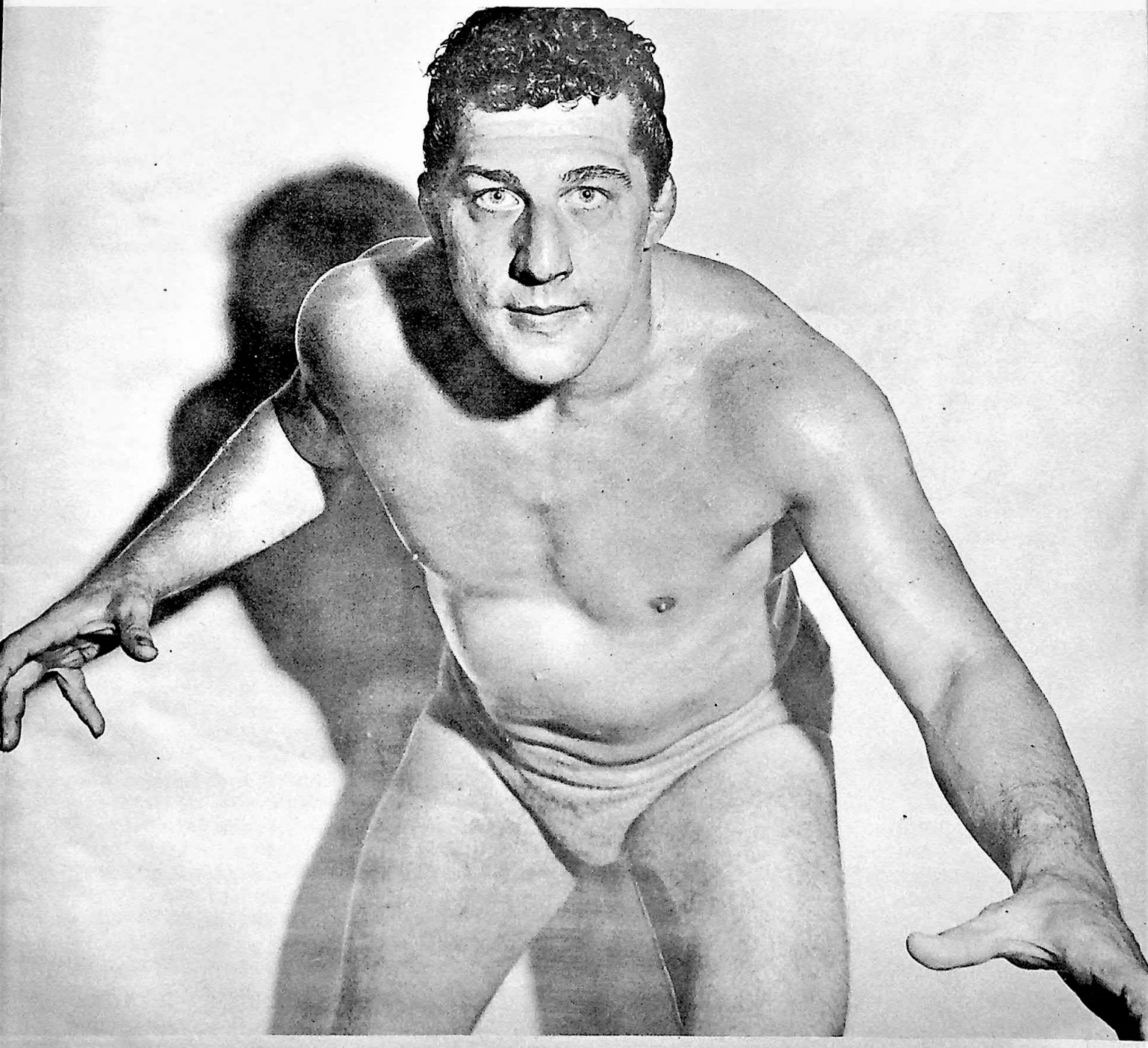
That, of course, called for an explanation. Slowly, in his shy retiring way, Jim told about the coal miners and how he longed to fly so high he would never see a mine again.

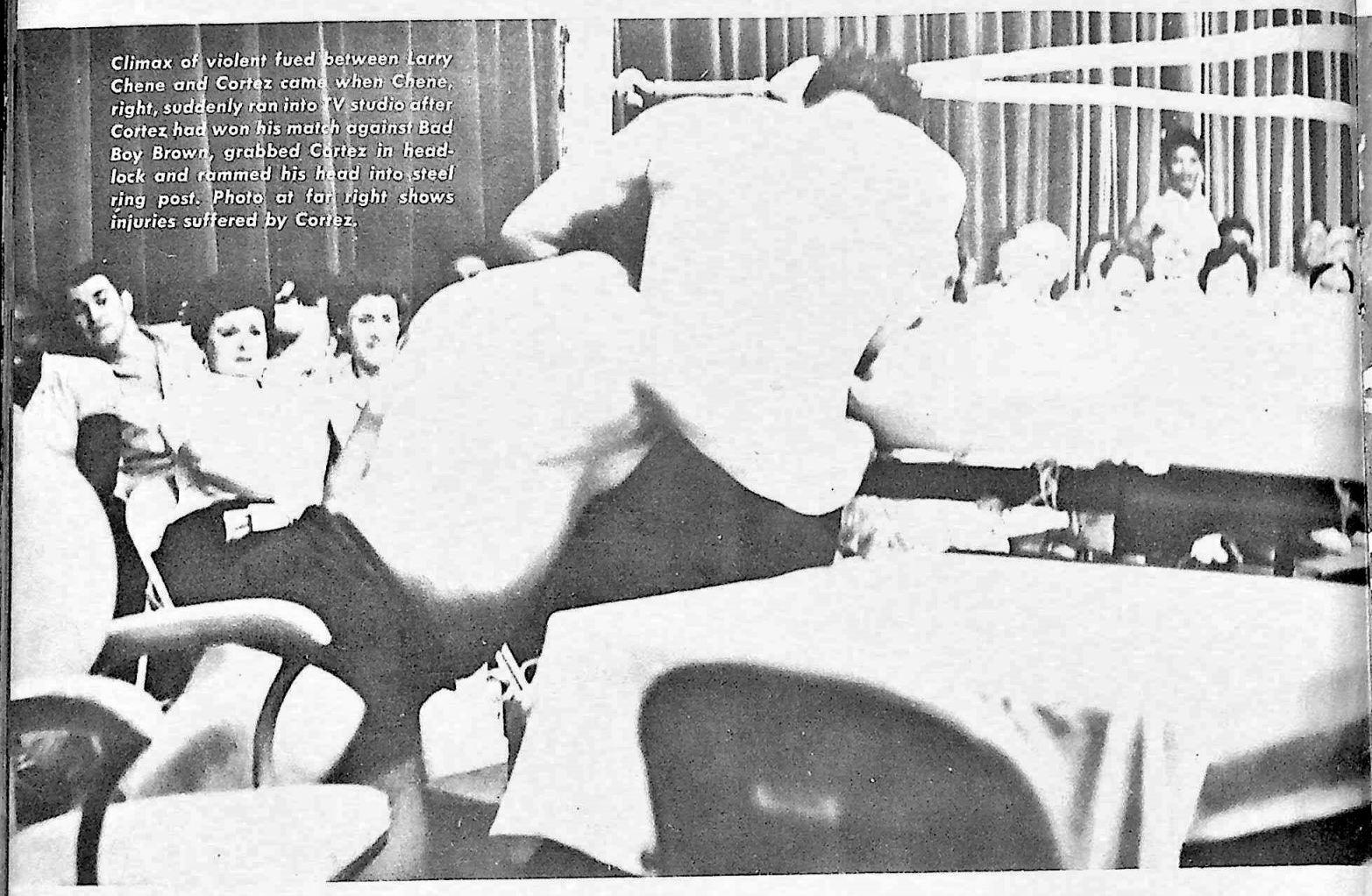
"I was born in Pittsburgh on the Fourth of July," Jim began.

We cut him off. "Our files show you were born in Detroit."

Hady shook his head. "Yes," he said, " a few publicity releases went out that way before I had a chance to make the correction. Sorry."

He went on with the *true* story. "My father worked in the coal mines. I remember him coming home from work black with coal dust. It took him a half hour to clean up before dinner. Sometimes he couldn't get all the dirt off, and sometimes he was just too tired to try. We'd eat, and then, instead of playing ball or a little rough house with us kids, the old man would doze off in a chair, then go to bed. We hardly ever saw him. Someday, I knew, it was expected that I'd work in the mines myself. I decided that I'd never do it. I used to plan ways of escaping it. One of the ways was to become a pilot. Then I could fly over the mines, nice, and cool, and clean. But I never quite made it." (*continued on page* 72)





Climax of violent fued between Larry Chene and Cortez came when Chene, right, suddenly ran into TV studio after Cortez had won his match against Bad Boy Brown, grabbed Cortez in headlock and rammed his head into steel ring post. Photo at far right shows injuries suffered by Cortez.

RICKEY CORTEZ

The Touching Story

THE SLUMS OF MEXICO CITY are among the worst in the world. The tourist rarely gets into them, except for a quick, air-conditioned glance from a speeding Cadillac. He doesn't see the filth of the dark, dingy houses, the filth in the tiny back yards, with the pigs and chickens sharing the vermin-ridden beds with children. He doesn't see any of this—or if he does, he thinks it's "colorful," and "quaint."

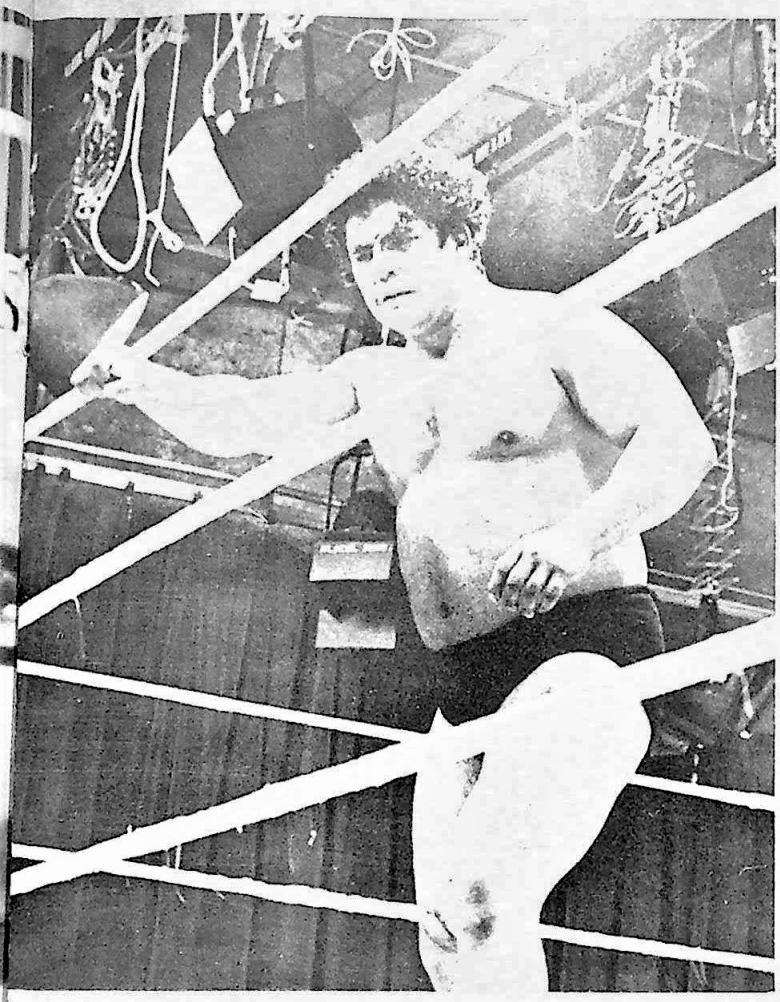
Ricky Cortez doesn't think it's colorful or quaint. He thinks it's hell. When he tells about his childhood in Mexico City, his dark eyes flash and he looks as mean as he ever did in the ring. Which is damned mean.

"In order to survive your childhood in those slums, you had to be faster, stronger or smarter than the next guy." Cortez looked down at his brown, muscular body, one of the most powerful in wrestling, as though he couldn't quite believe what he saw. "I was weaker than any of the others —at first. So I had to be faster. Coming home from school each day was a foot race. I built up my endurance and lungs, running away from the bullies. But then, by wrestling with my brothers and friends—not to mention the pigs—I built up my body. By the time I was thirteen, I could lift a 200-pound pig in my arms and squeeze it till it squealed. Oh, I didn't have any ambitions to be a wrestler then. Didn't even think about it."

The 250-pound Cortez paused for effect, a touch of humor in his hard eyes. "I intended to be a bull-fighter—I knew I'd have to be strong."

We were in the dressing room of the wrestling arena in Flint, Michigan. Around us, in the poorly lighted, unventilated place, a dozen wrestlers were preparing for—or recovering from—their bouts of the evening. Some of them were smaller than Ricky Cortez, some bigger, some handsomer. But the black-haired Mexican seemed to dominate them all, even though he was now relaxed on a bench, clad only in a jock strap and a thin film of sweat. So powerful is Cortez' personality that several of the other wrestlers paused to listen to a story they had already heard.

"Every kid in Mexico—every poor kid—wants to be a bull fighter," continued Ricky. "It's the only way they can escape poverty, the worst disease in Latin America. When I was about fourteen, I decided to make my play. I went out to a ranch where they raised fighting bulls. Every now and then, a kid will strike the owners as good toreador material and they'll get a chance to prove it. If they can face up to the tough yearling bulls, and if they have the proper grace and coordination, they may go on to fame and fortune. But me, I never even got the chance." A dangerous glint came into the big wrestler's eyes. "The owner took one look at me and said I should quit wasting my



Picture at left shows Cortez snarling back at jeering crowd after he beat Bad Boy Brown with a series of elbow smashes and knee drops. As soon as he stepped out of the ring he was attacked by Larry Chene (see photo at far left). Back in his dressing room, Cortez is caught by WRESTLING REVUE photographer. Deep cuts around his eyes required 15 stitches.

of a First Class Heel

BY MICHAEL A. GLICK

time. I was much too big and husky to be a toreador. Did you ever see a matador with big muscles?" he asked. "No, you haven't. They are all slim and wiry, for they must move quickly—otherwise they die." So I was sent back home. Ain't that a laugh?"

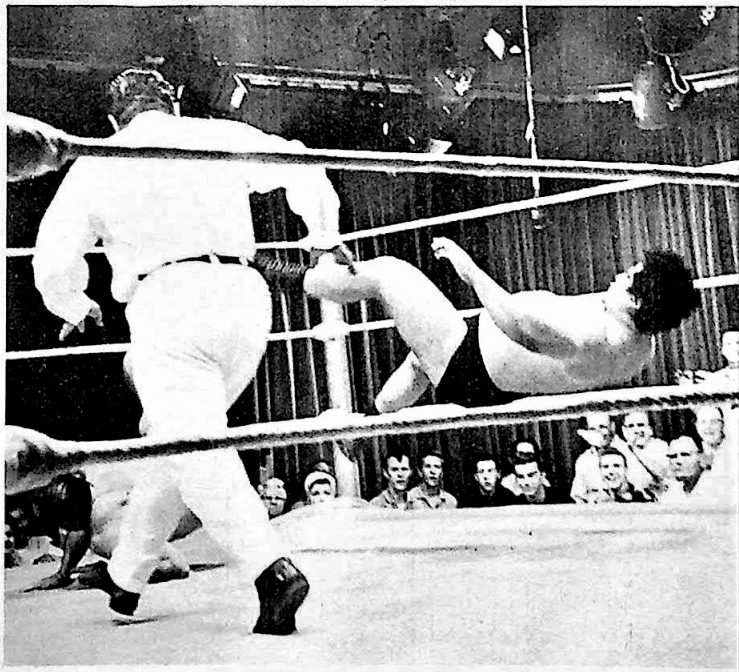
It is—a loud laugh. Because today Ricky Cortez is not only bigger and stronger than ever—he is as fast as any bull fighter who ever lived. He has to move quickly or —although he might not exactly die—he could be beaten to a pulp five nights out of every week.

No one has beaten Cortez to a pulp, yet. The likes of Jim Hady, Larry Chene and a few others have given him a hard time, drawing his blood more than once, but Ricky has managed to survive and to keep wrestling.

He grinned now, an almost human grin that transfigured his tough face. Few of the paying customers have ever seen such an expression on the villainous Ricky Cortez. It's too bad.

"I feel like going back to that bull breeder one of these days. I'd offer to fight one of his bulls. Then, when the bull charged, I wouldn't 'fight' him by stepping aside and letting him gallop past. No, I'd seize him in a hammerlock, hurl him to the ground with a cross buttock, then snap his neck with a full nelson. What a victory it would be!"

(*continued on page* 74)



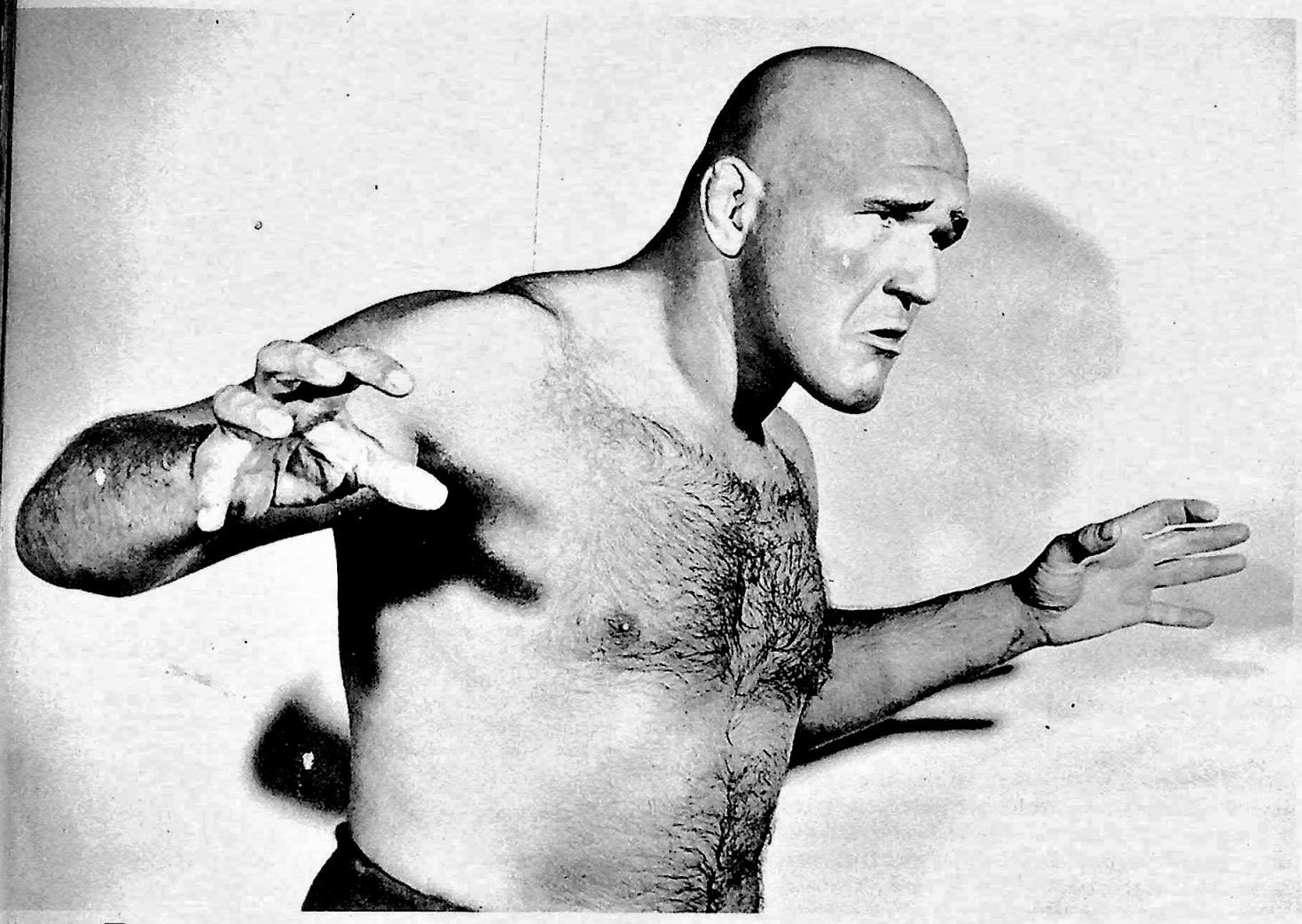
Cortez is remarkably agile for a man his size. Here he is about to land on canvas after delivering booming drop kick to victim's face. Ricky stands 5'11", weighs about 250 lbs.

The fans and other wrestlers know about Jim Bernard—

"THE BRUTE."

That's why they say....

STOP HIM BEFORE HE



AS "THE BRUTE" STRODE DOWN the aisle from the dressing room, a thousand citizens of Flint, Michigan jeered and hissed. The arena in which wrestling shows are held in Flint is small and something of a firetrap; they don't allow smoking, so the air is clear, if not exactly fresh. It makes the crowd noises seem even louder. For The Brute, they were deafening. The big man, his shaved head gleaming beneath the low-slung lights, ignored them, his large features and close-set dark eyes a mask of concentrated hate.

At the ringside, The Brute paused before stepping into the ring. A small, well-dressed, scholarly looking man seized the 18-inch arm in his tiny hand and leaned forward, whispering in The Brute's ear. The monstrous creature frowned, glared at the little man—who looked back at him calmly—and then nodded. Pressing his lips together, he leaped up and through the ropes.

A writer, watching closely, noted an important thing; the wild look that had characterized The Brute's expression had suddenly vanished. He looked calmer now—more like a human being rather than an animal. Who was this little man with the meek appearance—and the iron control over one of wrestling's fiercest monsters?

"It's his father," said one fan, knowingly.

"Naw," jeered another, "—it's his manager. All them managers are weak-lookin' little guys, but with brains!"

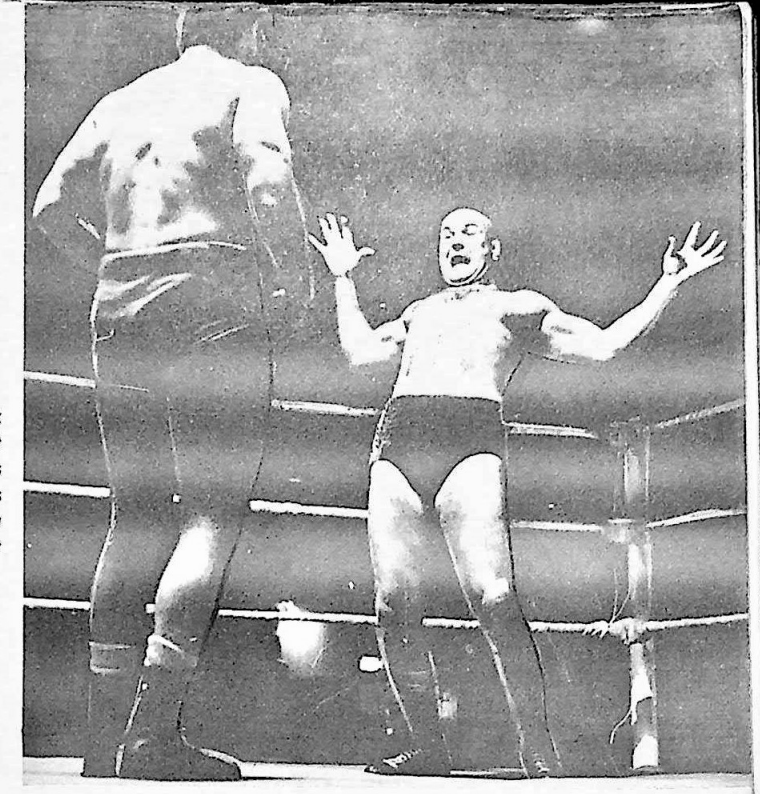
A third fan raised an eyebrow. "It's neither," he said, and he sounded as though he knew for sure, "—that's Jim Bernard's psychiatrist. The man who keeps him from killing his opponents."

It sounded like a gag, or a publicity stunt—but a fascinating one. The writer decided to look into the matter.

It's no gag. Half way through the one-fall bout, after inflicting severe punishment on big New Zealander

BY AUSTIN LEEDS

KILLS SOMEBODY!



The Brute flares back in anger as opponent Abe Jacobs waits his next move. Abe was then lifted up like a child and hurled out of ring.

Abe Jacobs, 250-pound Jim "Brute" Bernard, in the act of ramming the other's head through the ring floor, was seen to stiffen suddenly. From the ring apron came a quiet but compelling voice, *"Jim!"*

It was the doctor. As Bernard stared at him momentarily, the bespectacled man leaned forward and stared. He shook his head. Bernard eased up. A few minutes later, it seemed that the tide had turned. Jacobs, a fine wrestler in the heroic mold, took advantage of the quieted Brute to make his move. But the onslaught only served to enrage Bernard again. He seemed to go berserk as he clubbed and tortured his victim.

It was ten minutes before Jacobs, thoroughly beaten, could leave the ring. The Brute, not satisfied with victory alone, kept hurling his hapless victim around the ring, punishing him severely. At last, slipping from The Brute's grasp, Abe managed to get to the temporary safety of the apron. The monster, his eyes unfocused, rushed after him. Luckily, they came through the side where The Brute's psychiatrist stood, looking very worried. The little man grabbed Bernard's arm as he went by.

"That's enough!" the analyst whispered hoarsely. Again Bernard stiffened; slowly, he relaxed. Jacobs made it to the stairs that led down to the dressing room.

The chief of the arena police force came up. "Think it's safe to let Bernard go down there? There's only one dressing room in this place."

The doctor said it would be okay. "He'll be all right now that the match is over. He only gets wild in the ring."

The writer, standing close by, followed big Jim Bernard downstairs. He knew he had a story. Here it is:

Twenty-five years ago, a son was born to the Bernards of St. Jerome, Quebec, Canada. He was a handsome child, normal in every respect; the Bernards were happy. But not for long. It soon became clear that young James was going to be heavy. Too heavy.

The tough breaks started for Jim Bernard from the very beginning. Not only was he a fat and unlovely kid, but he was destined to be brought up in an orphanage. He had two strikes against him before he even went to bat.

Young James grew heavier and heavier. And the fatter he got, the more the other children made fun of him. Instead of fighting back, Jim would just grit his teeth and hold in the resentment. Slowly, he built up a vast well of hatred that was to play a big part in his later life.

Finally, the nuns at the orphanage could no nothing more with him. As the taunts of the children grew in number and volume, the boy grew unruly and surly, refusing to cooperate with the regimentation or the kindliness.

He was fourteen when everybody concerned decided he was big enough to go out into the world on his own. They said goodbye, in relief, and James Bernard went.

He was big enough, all right. He weighed 315 pounds.

And he went to Montreal, the nearest big city. *Maybe,* thought James, *with so many people in that town, some of them will be nice to me.*

A few of them were. One gave him a job in a meat packing plant. This was after the monster of a youth had failed at job after job. In his teens, he was not sufficiently educated to hold any responsible position. And when he finally got the packing job, he was close to suicide.

It didn't last too long, even though it was the first time he'd worked at something where he could use his great natural strength. But the best thing that ever happened to James Bernard was when he lost that job.

The hard work was wonderful for growing muscles—and reducing. By the time he was 18, he had pared down to a trim 260—mostly muscle. And he was even stronger. It was child's play for him to lift a full hindquarter of beef up onto the hook.

One day a short, stocky man came into the plant; he watched Jim work for awhile, then spoke up. "How'd you like to be rich, famous independent and happy?"

Jim Bernard said, *"Je ne comprends pas."*

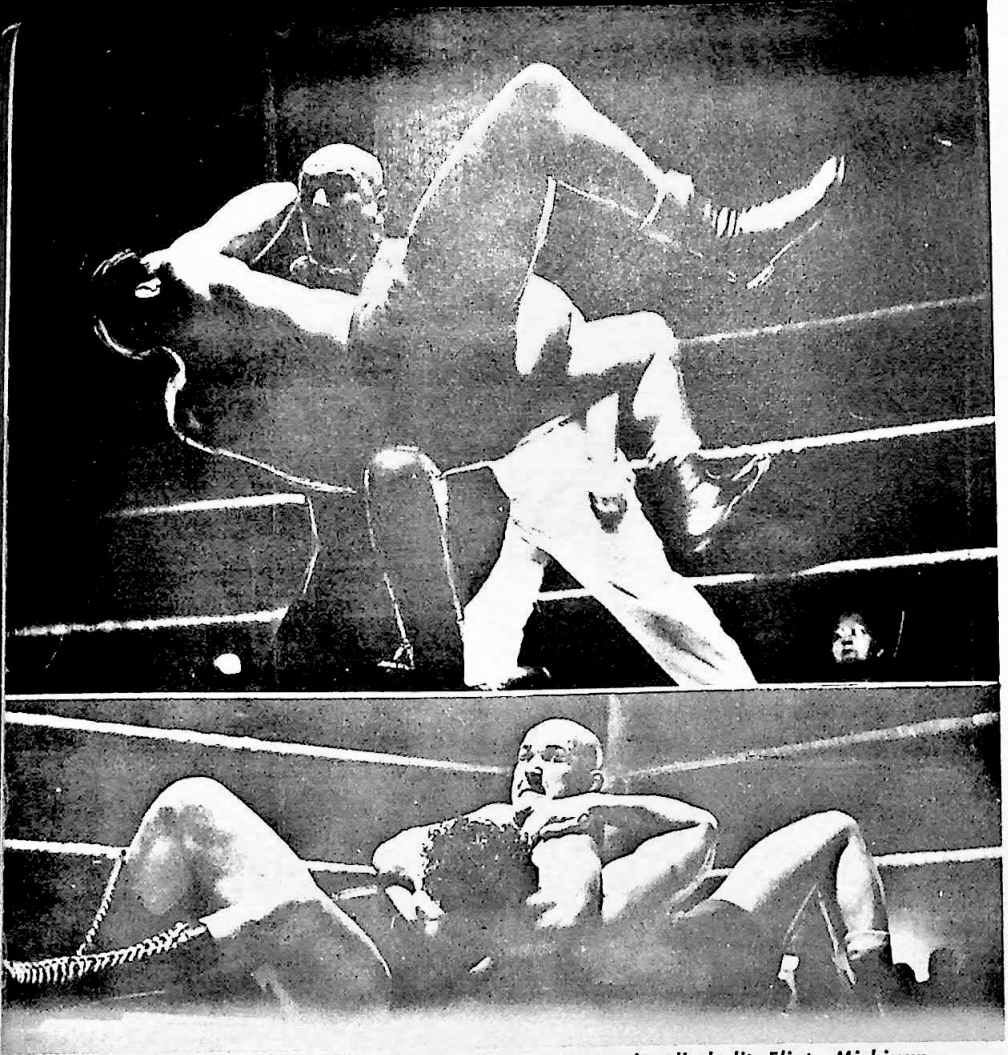
It was the third strike against Bernard: he could speak no English.

But the stocky, curly-haired little man could speak French. He said, "I'm Jack Britton, a wrestling promoter. I'd like to try you out in the ring."

These words were to change Bernard's whole life.

Not overnight. His is not exactly a Cinderella man story. First, before becoming rich, famous and independent, Bernard had to learn how to wrestle. It took him four years of intensive training and amateur competition at the Montreal YMCA.

But Big Jim was happy. At last he



Top: The Brute looks like Frankenstein monster in dimly-lit Flint, Michigan ring as he applies back-breaker on Abe Jacobs. Abe had to be helped from ring. Below: Jacobs is caught in The Brute's crushing headlock just before finish.

had found a way to get even for all the years of misery at the hands of the other children. Like him, the other children had grown up, too. When he was in the ring, it was almost as though he was hitting back at them. Sometimes he hit too hard. After slamming a few of his opponents too viciously, he was warned by the AAU to take it easy. Britton had a tough time keeping his tiger — elephant, rather — within the bounds of the Law.

Jim had to get another job, one with shorter hours. So he was taken on as a bouncer in a night club. Only thing is, he bounced guys too hard. Once, a customer proved obstreperous, one of those guys who, with a drink or two in him, thinks he can lick the whole world. He picked the wrong part of the world to lick when he picked Bernard's night club. Jim slugged him, broke his jaw, threw him bodily into the street—and into the hospital. The guy sued.

Bernard was barred from working in the clubs after that. But by then he was almost ready to meet his destiny. Jack Britton figured he could take on just about any professional wrestler.

They shaved his head. It was all he needed to look about as terrifying as a hand grenade with the pin out. And the effect in the ring was the same. His first bout, in Montreal, almost resulted in a manslaughter charge. Jack Britton knew he had big trouble on his hands.

A day or two later, he called a meeting of the board of strategy, including promoter Eddie Quinn. "I'm taking this kid with me to Detroit," Britton told them. "But we've got to tone him down, somehow. Look at this letter I got from a lady fan."

The letter said, "Jim Bernard is exciting to watch, but a law should be passed prohibiting him from the ring. Why don't you stop that brute before he kills somebody!"

That's how Bernard got his title, "The Brute"—and that's how he got his head shrunk.

It was Quinn who suggested the psychiatrist. "The boy's not crazy, understand—he's just got it in for people in general, so he takes it out on his opponents. Maybe the analyst can steer him straight. Otherwise, He'll—"

"Otherwise," interrupted Britton, "I'm out four years of training."

They hired the best analyst in Montreal. The man came up with a startling, and somewhat frightening, story. "This boy's perfectly normal—until he gets into the ring. Then he tries to kill the kids who used to make fun of him when he was fat, mentally, that is. Someday, he may succeed!"

So now, before Jim Bernard, The Brute, goes to the wrestling arena, he goes to his analyst first. Sometimes, when he's meeting an especially good wrestler—like Abe Jacobs, as was the case in Flint, Michigan—the doctor goes practically into the ring with him. At each of the towns where Bernard is slated to wrestle, a good analyst is alerted for an emergency call —just in case.

In the few years he has wrestled professionally, Bernard has come up slowly but carefully, raised almost like a baby by Jack Britton and his partner, Bert Ruby. Bernard has continued to build up his strength, even though there is no longer any need for it. He is afraid of getting fat again. Although his weight-lifting ability is a secret, there are rumors that he lifts poundages overhead that the average weight lifter can barely get off the ground.

Britton and Ruby, both ex-wrestlers who know the business from the canvas up, think there is no limit to Bernard's ability. They're about ready to let him go all out in an attempt to master the wrestling world. All that stops them is Bernard's unknown power.

"I'd feel like hell if he really did rip somebody's face off," says Britton sincerely. "Still, we have to let him go, one of these days. Maybe put him in with Killer Kowalski or somebody like that. What a match *that* would be!"

As for Jim Bernard, The Brute, he doesn't even think about things like that. He's too busy improving his English. He does pretty well, too. Still, it's a terrifying experience for a pretty girl, waiting for a bus, say, to suddenly have this brutish creature come up behind her and say, "You—me—we have vahneela ize greem zoda, *non?*"

Almost as terrifying as having to meet The Brute in the ring. • *end*

THE BASTIENS make historic debut IN DETROIT

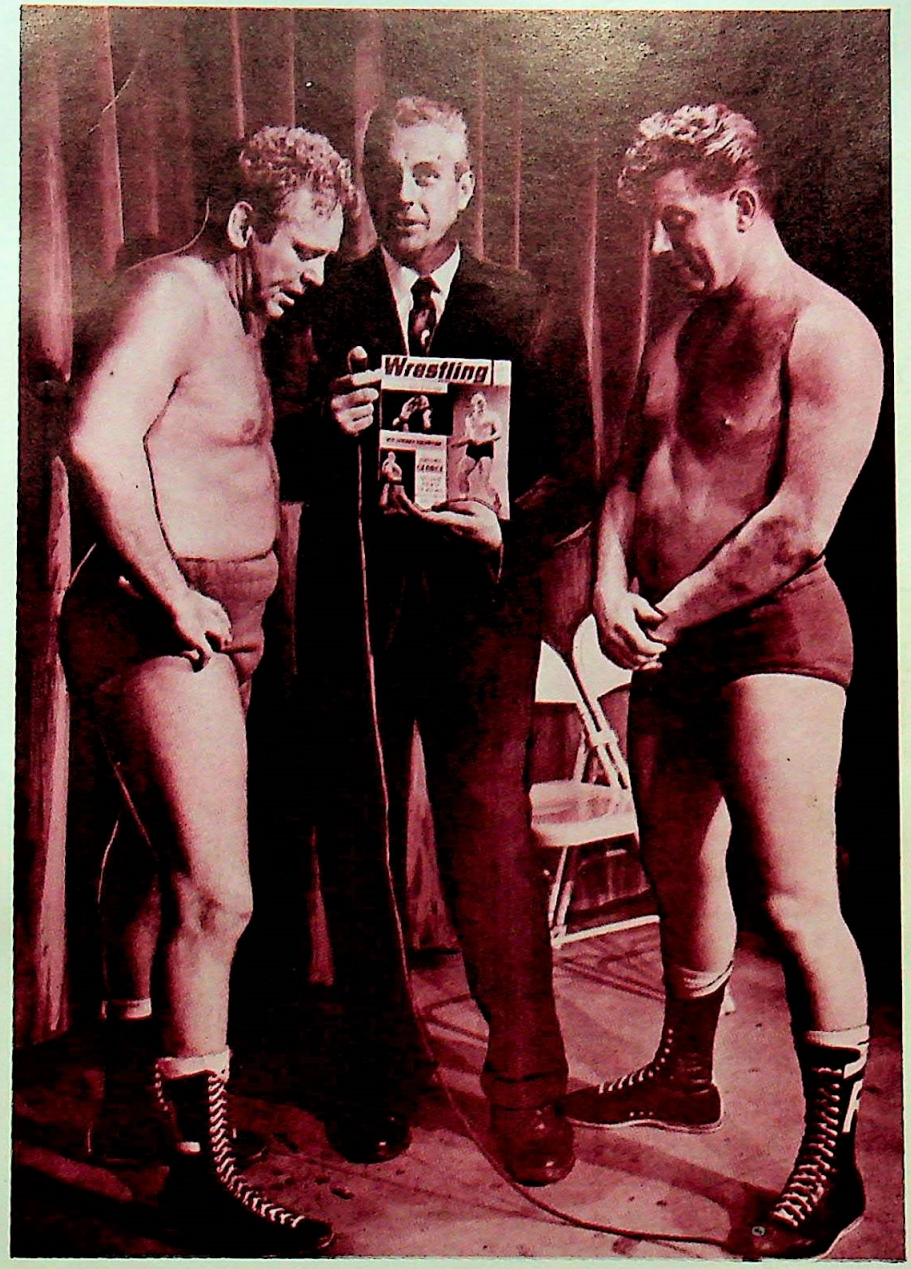
THE BASTIENS, RED AND LOU, need an introduction to eastern U.S. wrestling fans the way Liz Taylor needs an introduction to Eddie Fisher. During their meteoric rise from mere fame to household wordiness — in just six short months — these two red-headed hotheads have captured the imagination and hearts of fans from Virginia to Connecticut and from New York to Ohio. But the Bastiens as a team were, until a short time ago, little known outside the confines of Promoter Vince McMahon's sprawling eastern territory.

Each of the brothers, however, was well known individually in the areas where he had wrestled as a single. Red, for example, was a big name around Minneapolis, Montreal, St. Louis and Duluth. Lou, on the other hand, had long been famous around Columbus, Memphis and particularly Detroit, where he was born and raised. Since Lou owns a $45,000 home in Detroit suburb, Allen Park, together with three lovely daughters, a wife and various business interests, it was only natural that he should want his new role (senior member of the Bastien team) to become established around Detroit.

Since the Bastiens are only half brothers; same mother, different fathers, Lou had been wrestling under his correct name, Lou Klein, and it was by that name that he had built his reputation. Brother Red had the advantage of retaining the same name he had always used — Red Bastien.

After completing preliminary arrangements with Detroit promoter and longtime friend Bert Ruby, Lou agreed to be "reborn" in the old hometown as Lou Klein Bastien, wrestling with his brother, Red.

To Detroit the brothers brought their precious U.S. Tag Team Championship Belts, which they had lifted from the hated Graham Brothers in Washington, D.C. six months before. Their Detroit unveiling took place in the studios of WXYZ-TV on the afternoon of June 11, 1960.



After winning their Detroit debut, Bastien Brothers, Lou, left, and Red, appear on televised interview. While announcer holds copy of Wrestling Revue, Bastiens, explain that the real story of their amazing careers is told for the first time in Wrestling Revue's exclusive article.

The color photographs on the following pages are a vivid account of what happened.

The Sensational Bastiens

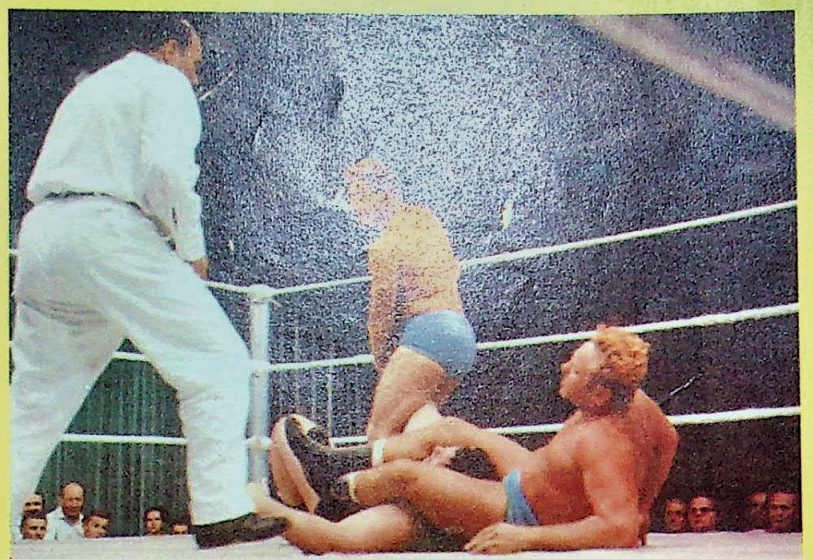
BASTIEN BROTHERS, LOU, SEATED, AND RED, POSE IN WRESTLING REVUE'S NEW YORK COLOR STUDIO.

Red works painfu
while brother Red

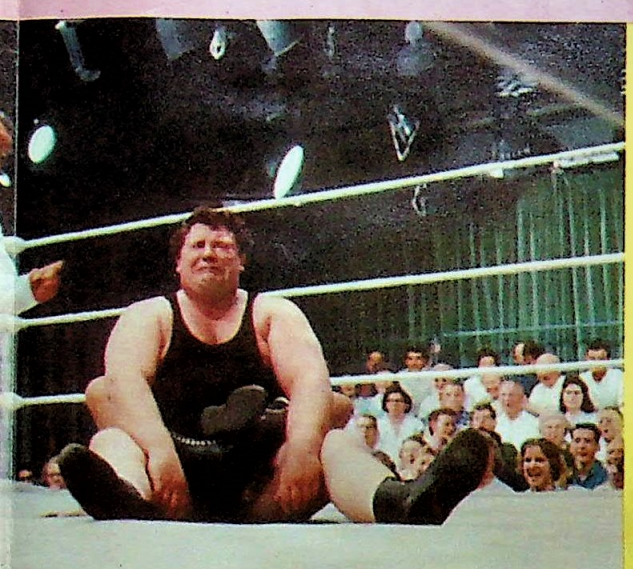
George McArth
George, slamme

Finisher was t
Hampton's thro

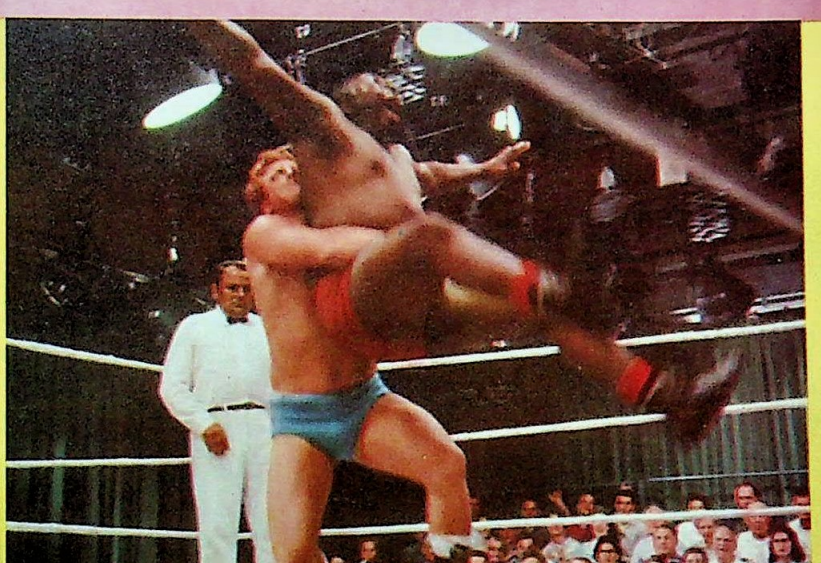
inful spinning toe hold on 340-pound George McArthur Red yells encouragement as he jumps on ropes.



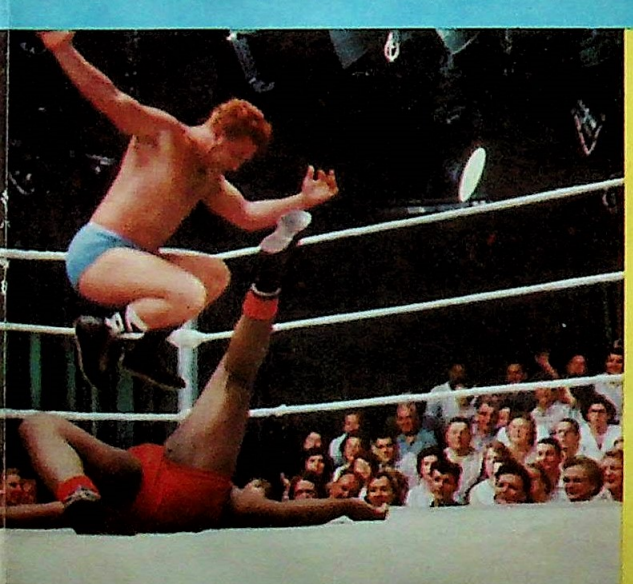
When McArthur kicked Red in the groin to break his toe hold, Lou jumped into ring and clamped McArthur in vice-like head scissors.



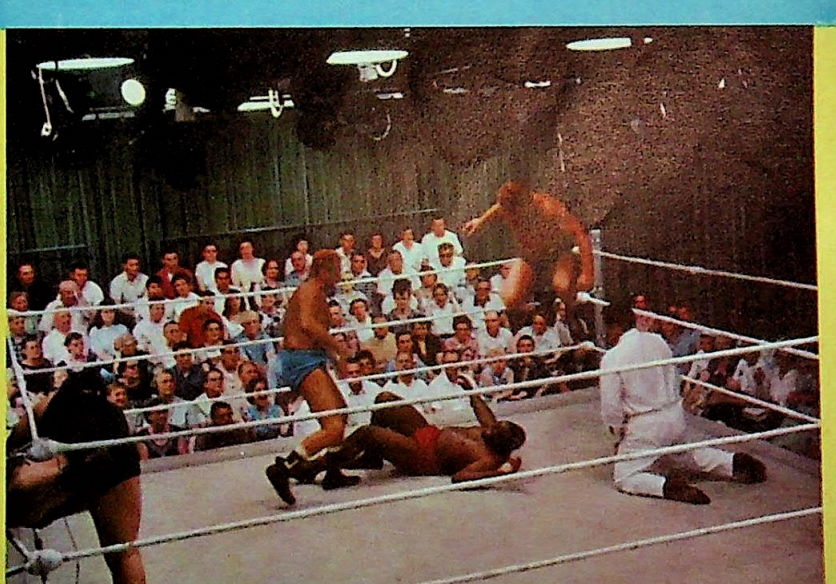
thur cries like a baby as Red Bastien, hidden behind med him to mat again and again with flying scissors.



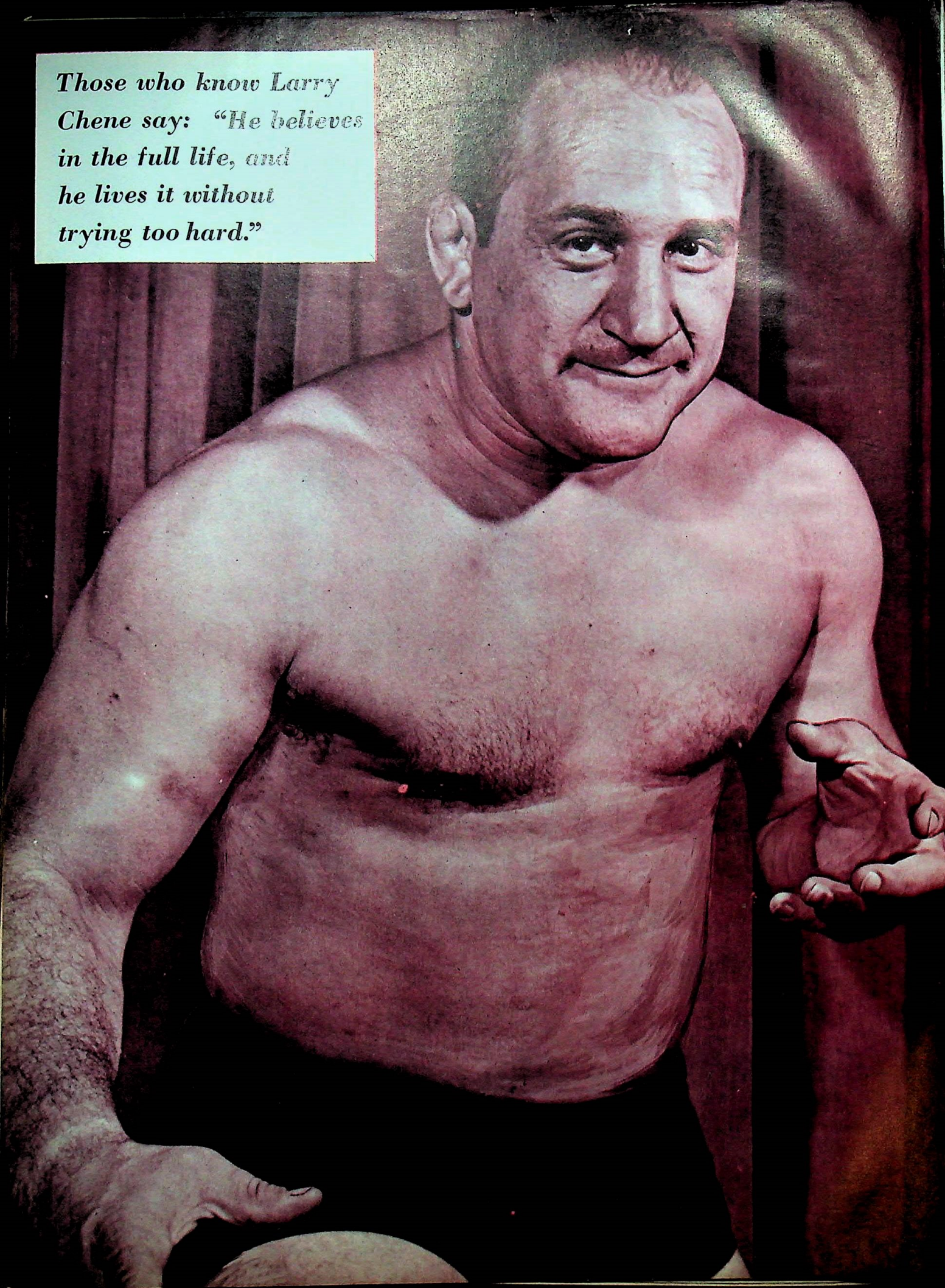
Tim Hampton, McArthur's tag team partner, is maneuvered into position for deadly back-breaker by Red at the 20 minute mark.



this savage knee drop delivered by Red across Tim roat. Hampton was out cold more than five minutes.



Long range view of ring catches Red in mid-air an instant before he knocked Tim Hampton unconscious. Lou, in blue trunks, watches.


Those who know Larry Chene say: "He believes in the full life, and he lives it without trying too hard."

The contented world of LARRY CHENE

BY LARRY TRENCH

LARRY CHENE (pronounced *Shane*) and Henry Ford (pronounced *Ford*) have a lot in common. Both took Detroit, Michigan by storm; both made a lot of money as a result; and both stayed there for a long time. Ford put Detroit on wheels—Chene set it back on its heels.

Here are some quotes, chosen at randum from a pageful, to back up this enthusiasm:

Bert Ruby, Detroit promoter: "He still surprises me. I tell you this guy can do anything Rocca can do—and do some of it better!"

Jack Britton, Ruby's partner: "It isn't often you see a wrestler with both great talent and public appeal. There was Thesz, Gagne—and now Chene. Chene may top the others."

Mae Joyce, a female fan: He's not handsome, exactly, but he sure makes me want to rub alcohol on his bruises, the poor lamb!"

Henry Carvel, a male fan: "I guess it's that he's got masculinity mixed with good showmanship. I'd like to know him as a friend."

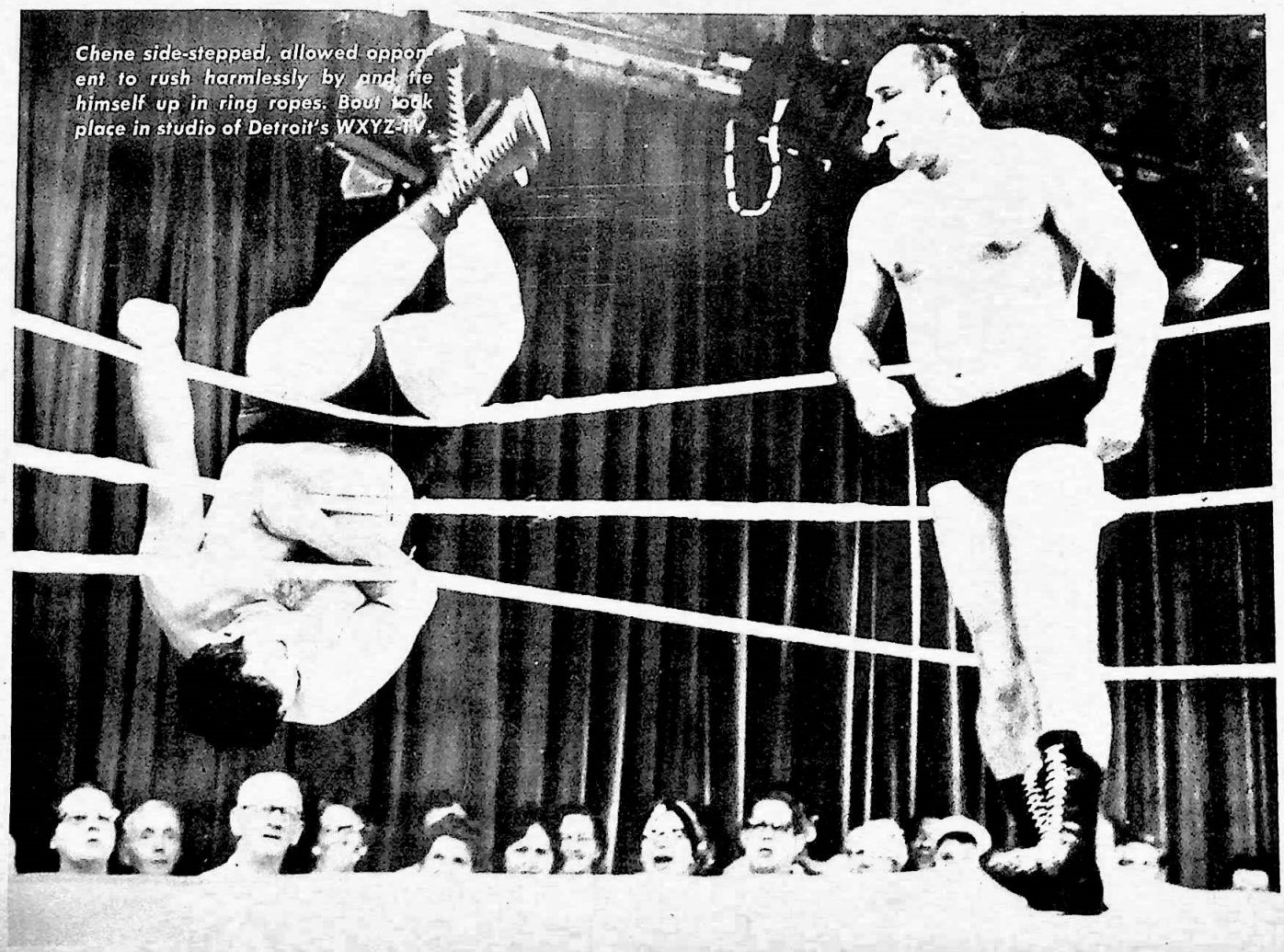
Tommy Yamoto, a Japanese fan: "Now I know why we lose war. Any country produce men like Chene can't lose!"

Larry Chene: "Thesz? Gagne? Who're those guys?"

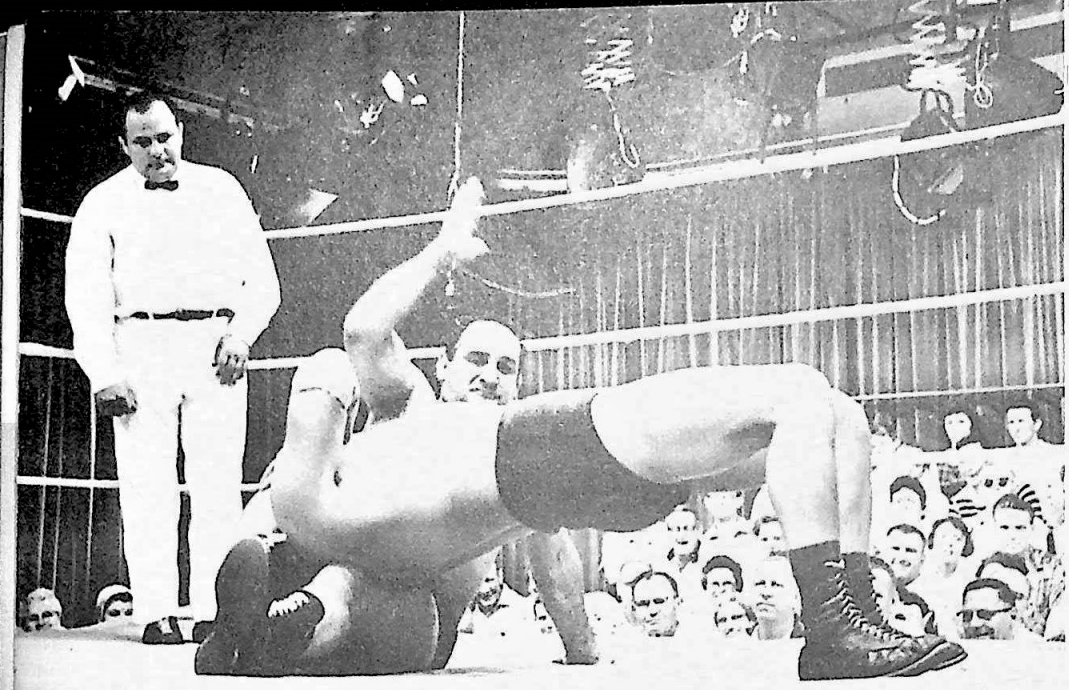
But opinion is never as strong as fact. Here are a few facts:

Returning to Detroit after an absence of six years, Chene was given a "guest spot" in a main event, televised over Detroit's station WXYZ-TV. So great was his impact on the home viewers that Larry was called back for another match. *Twenty-seven weeks* later he was still as popular as when he first started.

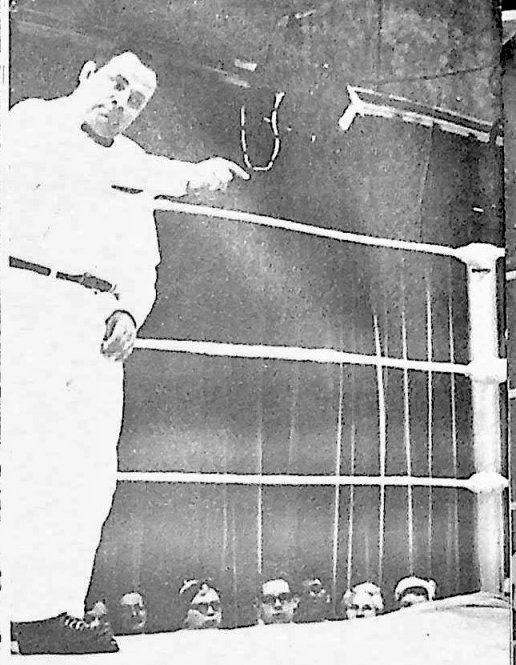
Between TV shows, Chene did yoeman duty around the state of Michigan, meeting the roughest opponents available. Some of it was pretty rough. Despite the awesome strength and actions of Jim "The Brute" Bernard,



Chene side-stepped, allowed opponent to rush harmlessly by and tie himself up in ring ropes. Bout took place in studio of Detroit's WXYZ-TV.



When Bad Boy Brown tries to break out of head scissors, Chene wacked him.



Stern warning by referee makes

Chene's incredible scientific skill completely hand-cuffed the giant, enraging him to the point his psychiatrist thought he might have a heart attack. Perennial enemy Ricky Cortez, outweighing Chene by forty pounds, is the most frustrated villain in the Midwest. He is convinced that he is a better man than Chene—yet the blinding speed of the Detroiter (Larry was born in the Auto City thirty years ago) prevented him from proving it in the several times they've met.

To appreciate Larry's drawing power, you can compare him with the man he has replaced in the affections of Detroiters; Lou Thesz: In the town of Saginaw, Thesz brought in $1,600. Chene drew $3,000, not just once, but *five weeks in a row!*

When Larry roared into Kingston, a few weeks after the citizenry had got to know him on TV, he pulled 1,470 persons into the little auditorium there. The reason this figure is so impressive—the entire population of Kingston is only 450!

And he packed nearly 4,000 fans into the arena at Caro, a town containing just 2,000 souls—all of them wrestling fans, apparently.

It is this sort of performance that has promoters Bert Ruby and Jack Britton doing mental back flips of ecstasy. Reporters have a hard time getting facts on Chene from them—facts about his life and loves—because the promoters just keep saying, "Oh, that wonderful, wonderful boy!" over and over.

So we went to Larry Chene himself. "How about a few facts on your life and loves?"

He never batted an eyelash. "I have five loves, altogether. Want me to name them?"

We hastened to assure him that this was not an exposé type article, but Larry wouldn't stop. He counted on his fingers, "There's Carol, Pat, Donna—and Mike, of course. That doesn't include my wife, who came first."

It was a relief to know Larry is a devoted family man. At the moment, he was preparing for his TV bout with Chicago's "Bad Boy" Brown. The improvised dressing room was a large garage and storeroom next to the studio. Down the center of the floor ran a long black film of oil, dropped from the mobile unit that parks there on non-wrestling days. As we spoke, Larry spotted the oil.

"Hey, watch this!" he yelled. Stark naked, except for his wrestling shoes, he raced toward the oil. Giving a monstrous leap, he landed on the oil at full speed. Like a jet plane taking off, he shot the full length of the garage. It was a startling sight, to say the least. Returning, he asked, "Now, where were we?" and continued donning his wrestling togs.

We told him he had just given us the word that describes him best. Extrovert.

Larry laughed. "I do what I like. Usually, it makes me happy, and now and then it makes other people happy. Anything wrong with that?"

We said it sounded like the perfect formula for a long, happy life.

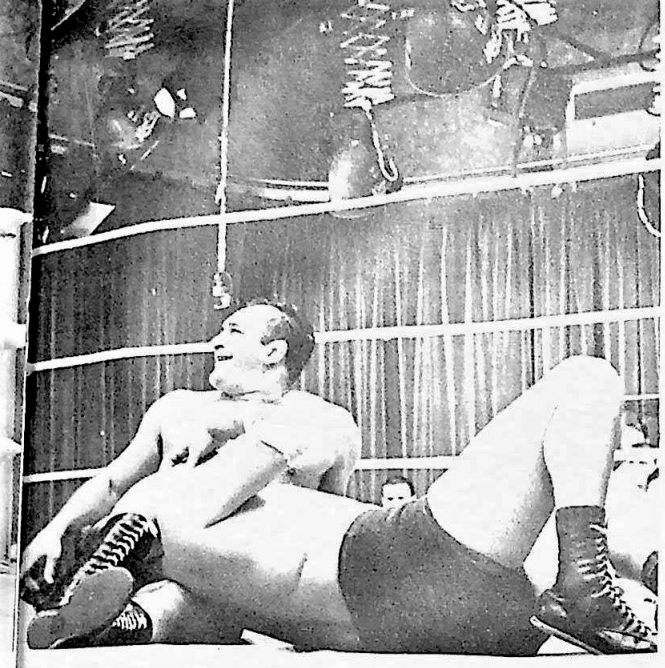
"It's worked up till now," agreed Larry. "But I've got a more important formula: *Make sure you love your work!* That way, no matter how much other trouble you may have—domestic, financial, and so forth—you'll at least be happy two-thirds of the time. Assuming you work eight hours a day, and sleep eight hours."

All of which proves that Lawrence Chene can do other things beside wrestle. He can think. Which is good, nowadays, when wrestlers, like other well-paid athletes, must be good business men.

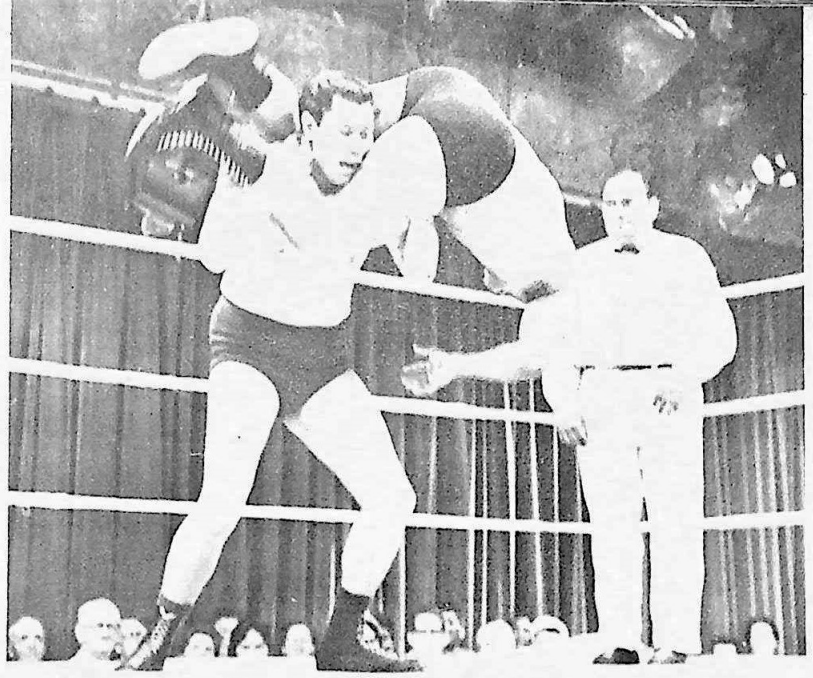
Chene started thinking long before he started wrestling. "For twelve years," he confides, "it was my ambition to be a musician. That's how long I attended the Conservatory. You'd never think, to look at me, that I might have been a Leonard Bernstein or a Van Cliburn." He grimaced, and his otherwise jolly features were not exactly those of a sensitive, creative musician.

"What made you switch to wrestling?" we asked.

"You hit it with your word, 'extrovert.' I'm not the kind that can turn my mind inside out, the way a composer or even a piano player has to. I figured, ten years ago, that music would give me an ulcer and



Chene laugh as he holds opponent Brown tight.



Chene makes spectacular moves. Here he catches Brown with flying scissors.

might kill me. Since I had the gift of perfect health, a tough constitution and a natural bent for athletics, I made the switch without any *mental* wrestling. It was quite a shock to my mother, though. She'd been convinced for twelve years that I was the next director of the Detroit Symphony, if not the New York Philharmonic."

Like more and more of the younger wrestlers, Chene was a good amateur. He got in several valuable years of college wrestling at the University of Iowa. There he knew that he had made the right choice of a career.

"I'd say that every year of amateur wrestling a man gets under his belt is worth two years of actual pro experience. In the amateurs you learn science that, coupled with the violence of professional wrestling, makes for the perfect wrestler. One thing is sure, a guy will reach the big time a lot quicker if he first becomes a good amateur. Look at Gagne, Carpentier and other modern champions. They're all scientific wrestlers and all learned their business in the amateurs."

Larry hesitated, as though aware that he hadn't quite finished his trend of thought. "Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that any amateur champion can beat a good pro—never! I'm only saying that if two guys start from scratch at the same time—with one going into the amateur competitions for a year and the other going pro right away—five years later, the one who started as an amateur will be making more money and will be closer to the top."

"After you got out of college, did you turn pro right away?"

He did. "Right after school, I figured I'd learn my profession the hard way. I went down to Texas. Now, if you can make it good in Texas, you'll make it good anywhere! They like 'em tough down there. Man, it was a good schooling! I learned things about wrestling that you just can't outside of Texas!"

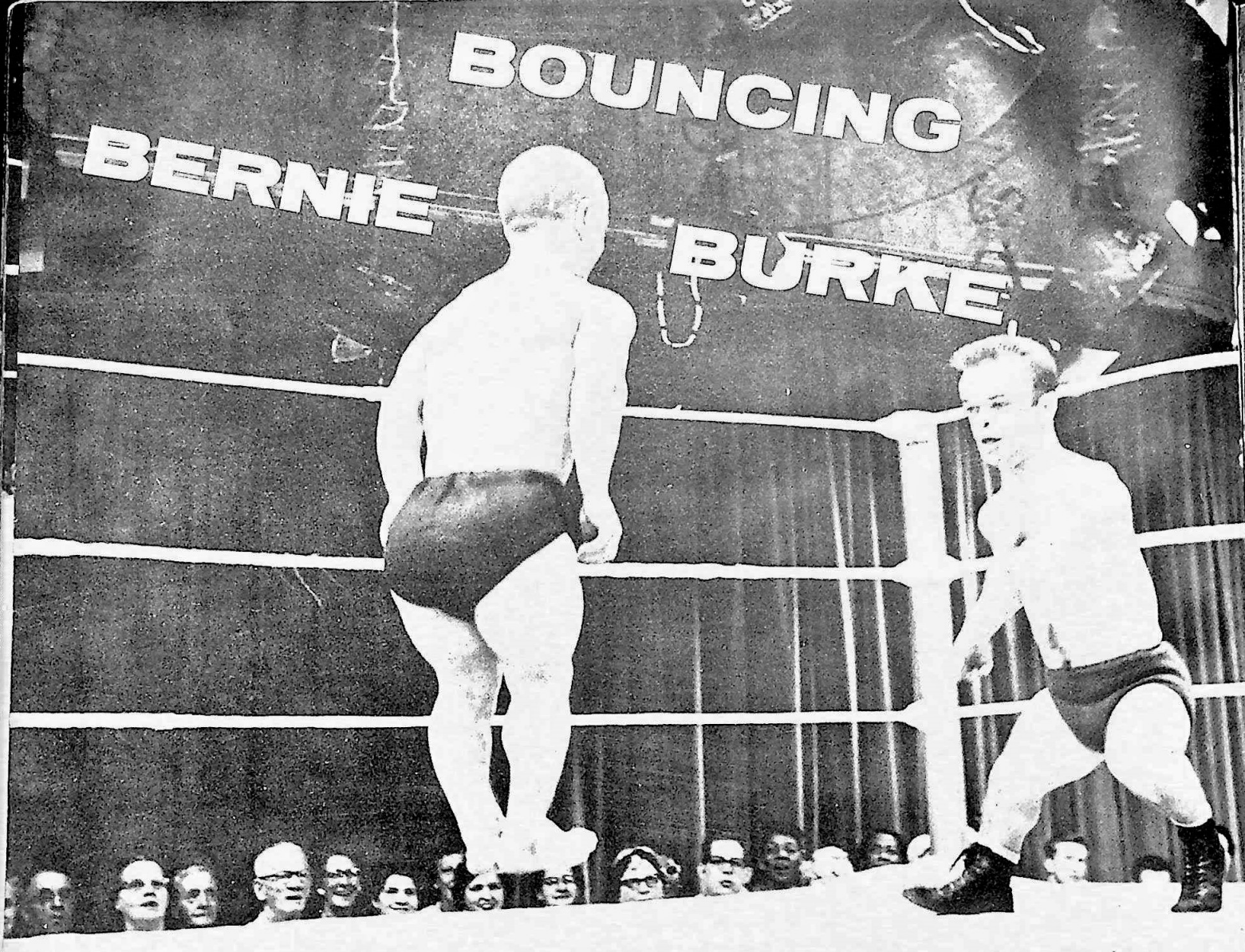
He stayed in the Lone Star State for six years. His companions were other lone stars like Dory Funk, Bob Geigel, Cowboy Carlson, Pepper Gomez and Enrique Torres. Together, they made up one of the toughest gangs of human beings since Pancho Villa rode through the same territory.

"Then, one day last year," says

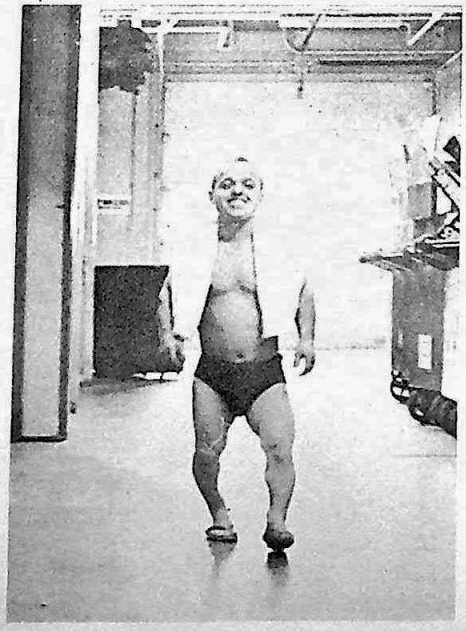
(*continued on page* 73)

Excellent wrestler Chene clamps wristlock on Brown before amused TV studio audience.

BOUNCING BERNIE BURKE



Burke bounces straight up as he gets set to attack villain Irish Jacky after the latter kicked him in the groin during bout in Detroit. Bernie is exceptionally fast and strong, boasts, "I pack more bounce to the ounce."



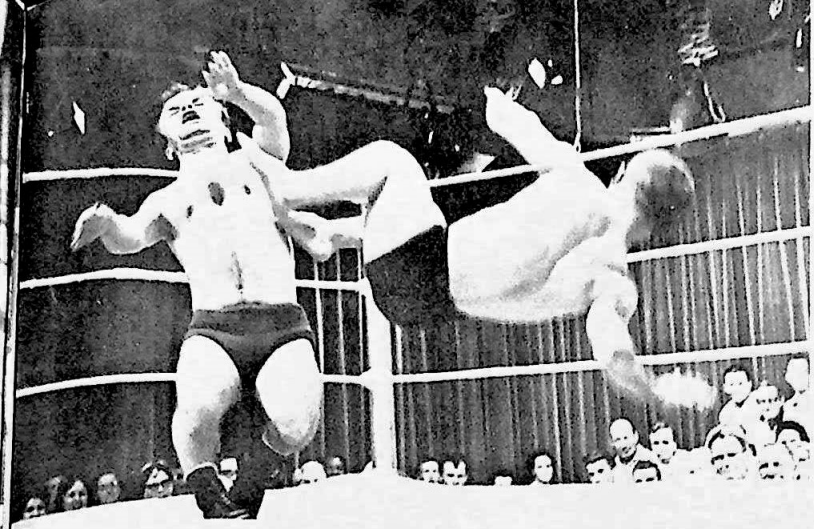
With perennial smile on his face, Bernie heads through TV studio toward the ring.

He looks like a kid on a pogo stick – without the stick

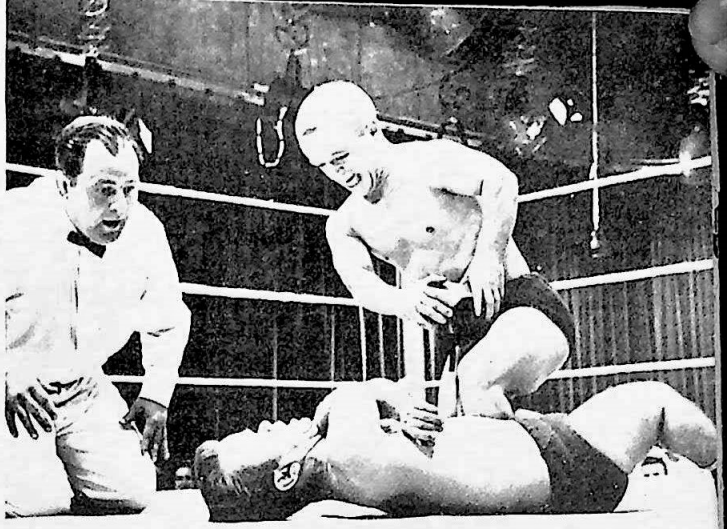
NEW MIDGET SENSATION "Bouncing" Bernie Burke sat in the wings of the Detroit television studio waiting to be called into the ring for his bout with old pro Irish Jacky. "Do you like this business?" we asked the 87 pound, dwarf who looks like a little kewpie doll.

Bernie grinned proudly. "I love it," he said. "Where would I be if it wasn't for wrestling? In a circus? In a soup kitchen? Bumming around the country living in hobo jungles? I can tell you that wrestling gives us little people the only opportunity to compete with you big guys on an equal level. We feel as big as giants out there in the ring with people cheering and applauding us. But you have to be a midget to really understand how we feel about it. It would be a sad day for a lot of little people if they took wrestling away from us."

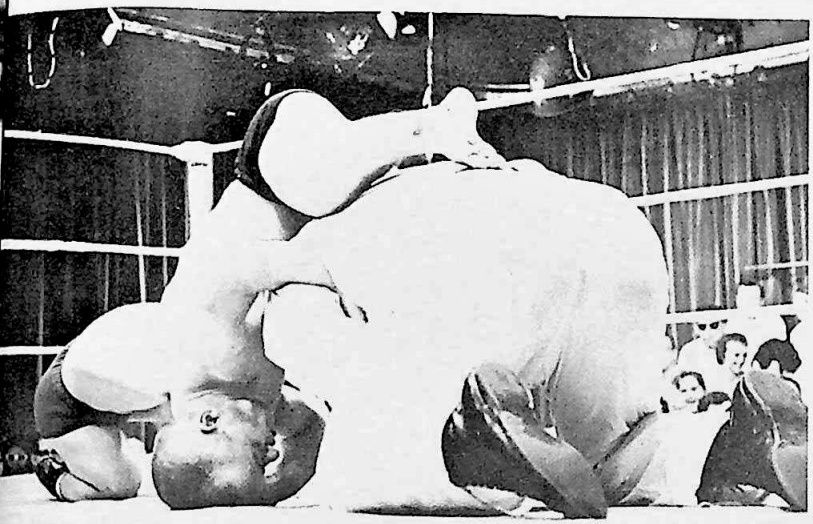
Bernie Burke is probably the most beloved midget wrestler in the world. He has a face that just naturally draws sympathy and affection. One woman looked at him and said, "he looks like somebody's lost child." Said another: "He reminds me of a little puppy begging for a biscuit."



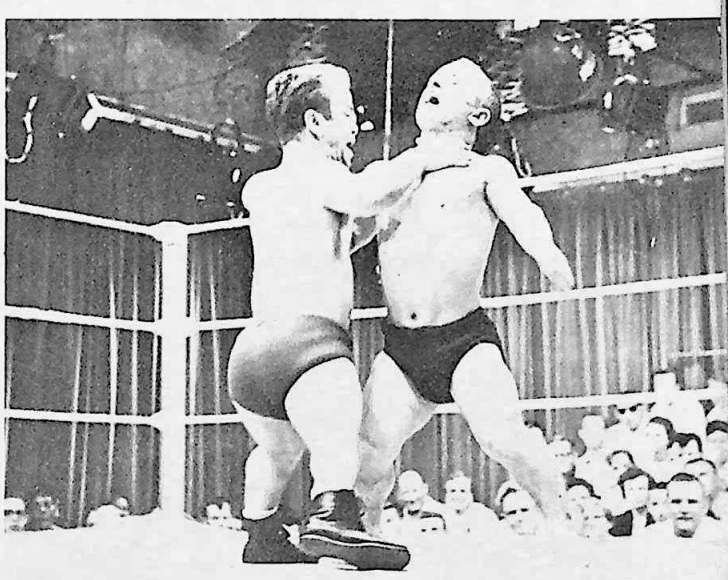
Burke catches Irish Jacky squarely in the face with powerful drop kick, knocking Jacky out of ring into laps of spectators.



Burke applies pressure on stepover toe hold, growls at Jacky, "Give up! Give up! Or I'll break it off." But Jacky didn't quit.



Burke crawls up the referee's back as he breaks out of Jacky's strangle hold. Jacky was warned repeatedly for foul tactics.



Jacky caught Bernie in claw-like strangle hold as Burke bounced off the ropes. But moments later, Bernie won the match.

But the most poignant description of Bernie Burke came from a 15-year old Detroit high school girl. "He reminds me of my baby brother. I just want to take him up in my arms and squeeze him."

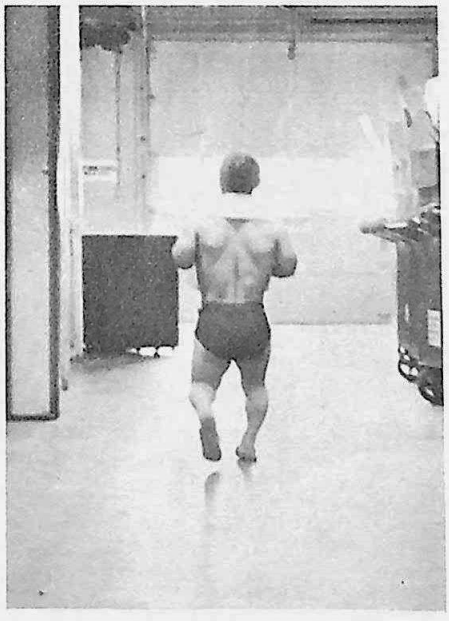
Bernie has conquered gravity, or at least he seems to break Newton's primary law every time he steps into the ring. Which is why they call him "Bouncing Bernie." He will show his enthusiasm by rising abruptly into the air, higher and higher, with no apparent help from his stubby legs. He just goes up, bouncing like a kid on a pogo stick—without the stick.

"I use my calf muscles and ankles, but I hardly bend them, so it's not noticeable." At least, that's what Bernie says. But to us, it seems to be magic.

The trick confuses his opponents. They appear to be so startled that Bernie, descending from on high, suddenly is able to dart in like a mongoose and *wham!* down goes said opponent with a midget crash. Since Bernie happens to be an excellent little wrestler, he rarely loses.

So, when Bernie came down out of the air, he fell upon Irish Jacky in a fury. This came after an exchange of give and take that had the crowd hollering their approval (approval when Bernie was winning, disapproval otherwise). After behaving like a miniature whirlwind, Bernie dismantled his flyweight foe and departed in triumph.

And this time, as hundreds of other times when midgets were on the card, everyone got a lift from the Tom Thumb interlude. There was a smile on every face, and there is no doubt about it—the little guys are a welcome addition to any wrestling program. • *end*



Delighted with his victory, Burke walks through studio back to dressing room.

Reggie himself was bad enough. But when he teamed with his kid brother, Stan, the 3,000 other professional wrestlers in North America ran for cover.

LISOWSKI means DOUBLE TROUBLE

SOME YEARS AGO a luscious blond stepped onto the ring apron at Chicago's Marigold Gardens. She leaned over and kissed sweat-covered Reggie Lisowski squarely on the mouth. The astonished wrestler stared at her with popping eyes. Then she kissed him again. The crowd roared and Lisowski snapped out of his stupor.

There was only one reason why tough guy Lisowski permitted such a liberty. At that moment, Pepper Gomez had Reggie's head tied between the ring ropes, threatening to decapitate him. Apparently the blond's kisses inspired and strengthened Reggie, for he abruptly broke free, seized little Pepper in his 18-inch arms and hurled him the full length of the ring.

The blond gaped at her hero with fascination, then turned to her equally lovesick, but less courageous redheaded companion and said, "The only way I could adore him more would be if there were two of him!"

Well, it has come to pass. Luckily for that little kissing bug, but unluckily for the 3,000 professional wrestlers in the U.S. and Canada, there are now two Lisowskis!" They are billed, of course, as the Lisowski Brothers. But they are called by other names; Double Trouble, Big and Little Poison, Two Punks from Milwaukee. There are other names but they cannot be printed.

The Lisowski career—the Reggie half of it—began back in 1947 when a 20-year-old strong man with little skill or finesse but with awesome strength, invaded Marigold Gardens and "wrestled" a 280-pound foe one fall. Actually, the young fellow merely lifted the big fellow up and dropped him onto the floor. It formed the pattern for the Lisowski style, and has won him a huge following around the country. And some of his fans actually *do* follow him around the country. There is one retired old lady from Des Moines who will happily take a plane to Dallas or Syracuse if Reggie is scheduled to appear. When advised that he ought to cultivate such a staunch fan—"She must be loaded," smirked promoter Al Haft—Reggie said, "Yeah, but with what?" Which proves he has a sense of humor, a quality almost never displayed by him in the ring.

The qualities he does display in the ring are fantastic strength, absolute disregard for the health and well-being of his rivals, and an obvious hatred of people in general.

Now all of this, which led to Reggie's becoming one of wrestling's leading villains early in his career and kept him on top, is doubled. Those who have witnessed the Lisowski Brothers in action claim that they make the Grahams and the Kalmikoffs look like barkers at a charity bazaar.

It is not known how the younger brother, Stan latched onto his vicious nature—maybe he was born with it—but Reggie thinks he got his own evil characteristics during the war. Reason? He was so young.

It was just a stripling of 18 who found himself yanked out of high school and away from his rigid weight training program to undergo army

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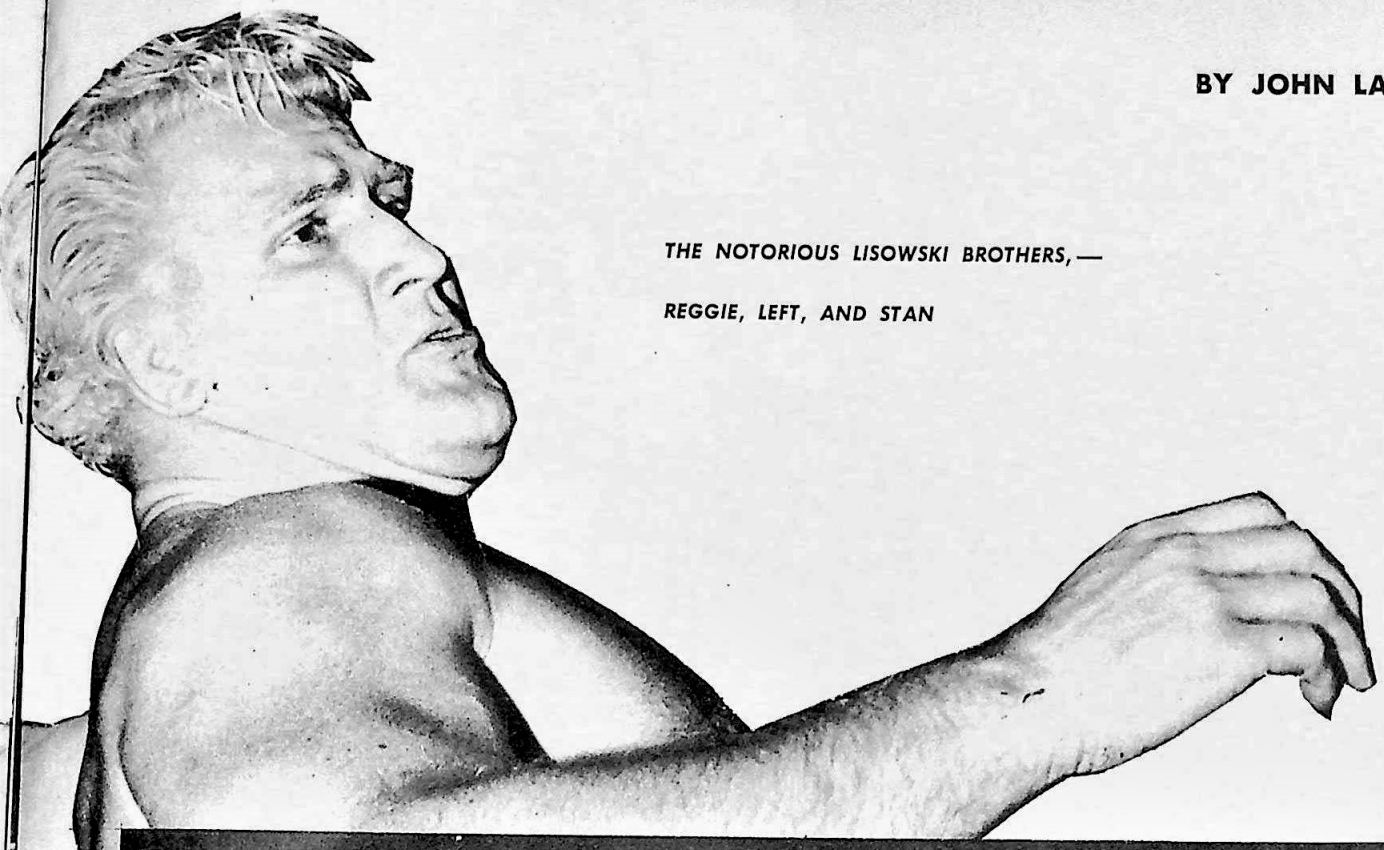
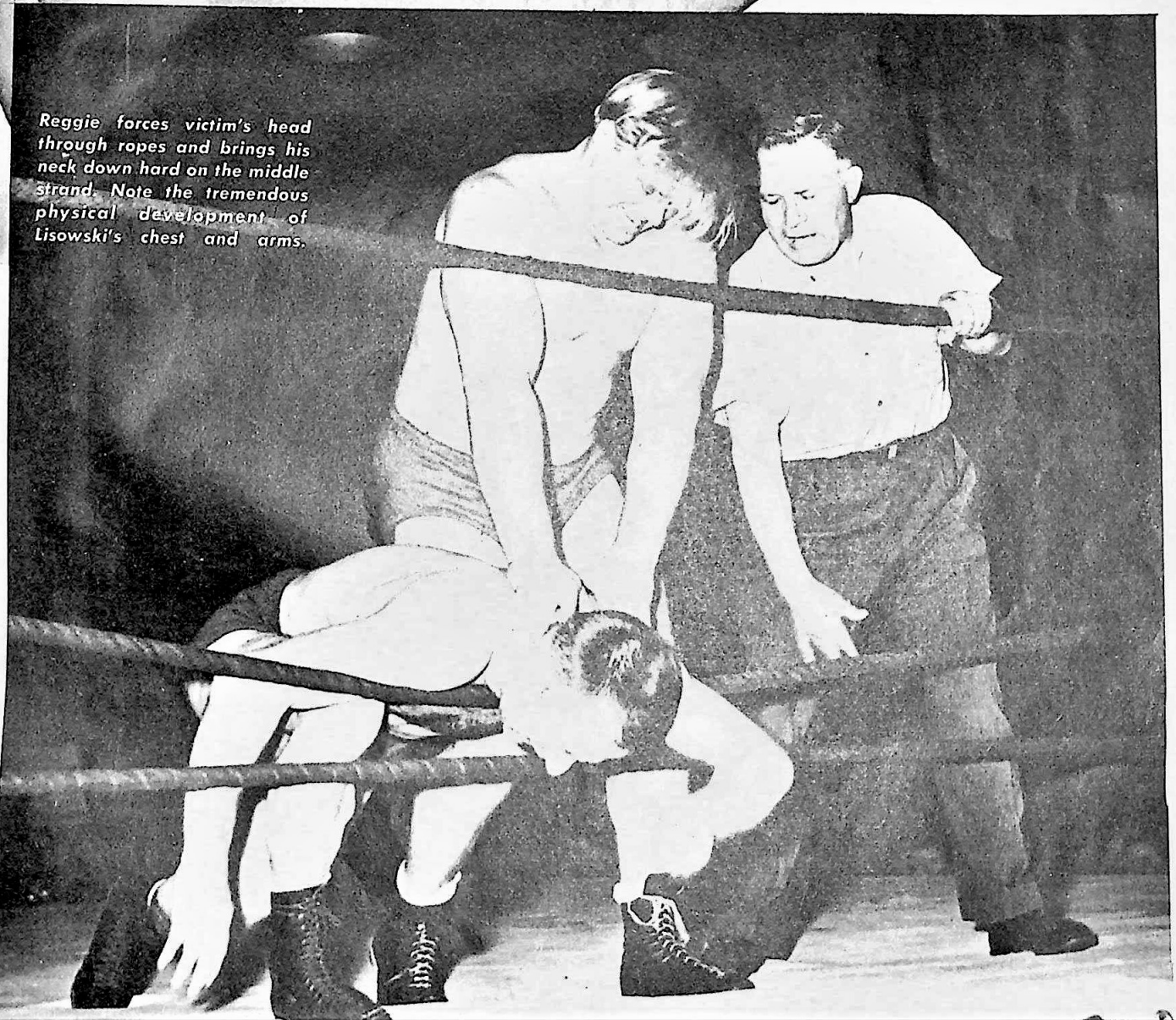
BY JOHN LANDIS



THE NOTORIOUS LISOWSKI BROTHERS,—

REGGIE, LEFT, AND STAN



Reggie forces victim's head through ropes and brings his neck down hard on the middle strand. Note the tremendous physical development of Lisowski's chest and arms.

Stan Lisowski reels under the impact of smashing right to the jaw thrown by enraged Wilbur Snyder during savage bout in Milwaukee won by Lisowskis.

basic training, a sickening boat trip —and a march into Germany as one of the first G.I.'s to enter that country. The entrance path was not strewn with roses and perfume, but corpses and broken human beings.

"I guess it made me sore at the entire world—people, I mean," says Reggie, 15 years afterward. "I was disappointed in society for letting itself get into such a mess. Imagine people killing each other by the millions in order for the survivors to get along. I thought, at the time that the war might be worthwhile, in a way—maybe it might do some good. You know, the war to end wars, and all that. But back home again, I realized that it didn't do a damn bit of good. When the Korean war came along, I decided it was all hopeless. It made me bitter, I guess. From that time on, I became a terror, as dirty as I could get—in the ring, of course. It helped me get rid of some of that bitterness I feel toward people for their own stupidity."

That's quite a mouthful for a grunt-and-groaner who weighs 240 pounds and looks like he could take candy away from a baby dinosaur. Goes to show that wrestlers have brains as well as brawn. It isn't their business to get into print with bright sayings, or ideas of the century. So, since they rarely talk to the press except to say they had a tough match with so-and-so, the fans think of them as guys with muscles in their heads. Reggie is the latest in a line of intellectual grapplers who can think as well as any of the guys screaming up at them from ringside.

About the only place where Reggie Lisowski has any friends is in his home town. In Milwaukee they know the real Reggie. Of course, there they get more of a chance to hear him talk.

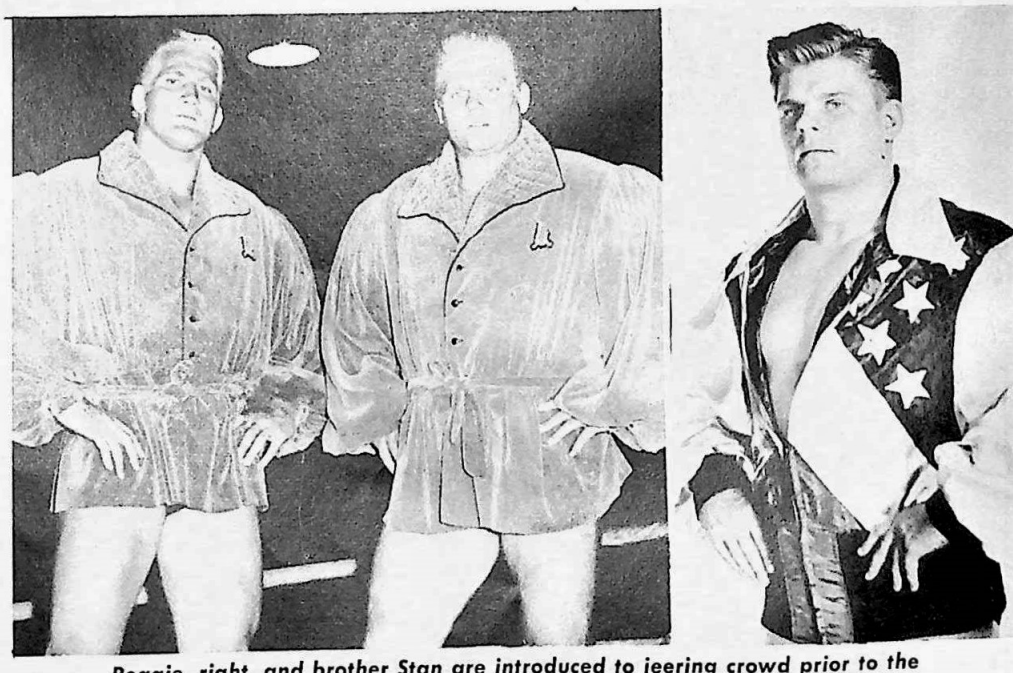
"No, I don't have any ambitions to write or express myself—except in the ring," says the big blonde bad man who, deep down inside, is as good as they come. Many people will argue that point—and they will also dispute the fact that Reggie has an intellectual mind. "He was a bricklayer for four years," they might say, "and didn't even want to be a wrestler in the first place."

This is true, in part. Reggie was a bricklayer, and a pretty good one, after getting out of the Army. This doesn't mean, however, that bricklayers can't be intellectuals (the guy who wrote the classic story, "Christ in Concrete," is *still* a bricklayer) and it doesn't mean that Lisowski had anything against wrestling. He was just a kid back from a war, like millions of others, and needed that four-year "breaking-in" period to get used to normal living again.

His size, strength and parents all convinced him that wrestling would be normal for him. Both John and Angeline Lisowski have always been in favor of their boys — another brother beside Stan—being active in sports. They knew that bricklaying was a dead end for Reggie. With the help of his athletic coach and a few trusted friends, they prevailed upon Reggie to make something of himself. Once he got started, there was no roadblock big enough to stop him.

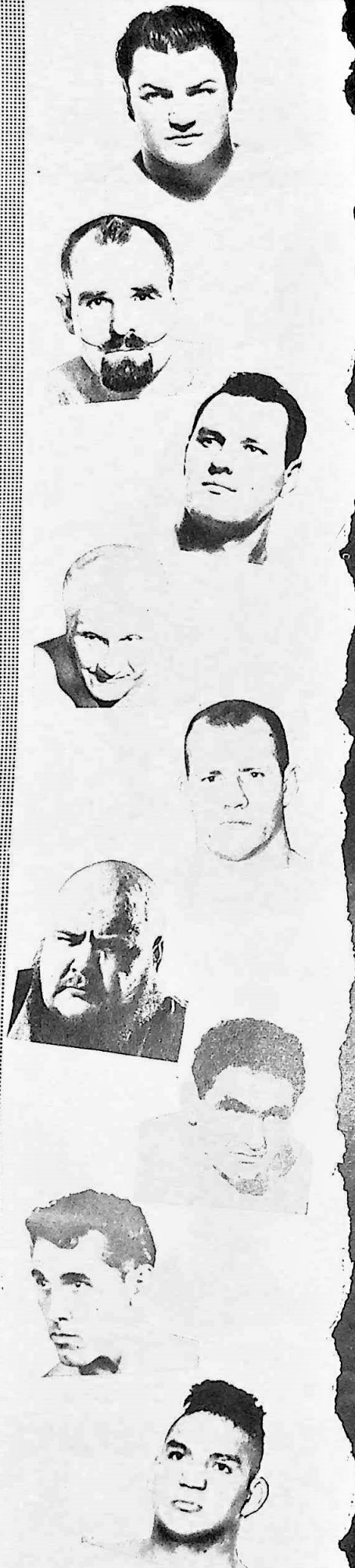
Since that first spectacular bout 13 years ago, Reggie has come a long way on his own. Now, with the help of younger brother Stan, he threatens to go even further. To the old question—How High Is Up? there is a new answer: About as high as Reggie Lisowski can lift his opponent.

And that's plenty high. • *end*



Reggie, right, and brother Stan are introduced to jeering crowd prior to the start of bout in Detroit. Picture of Reggie on the right was taken in 1950.

YOUR PERSONAL AUTOGRAPH ALBUM



On the following pages

WRESTLING REVUE presents A Portfolio of specially taken Portraits of some of the World's Leading Mat Stars

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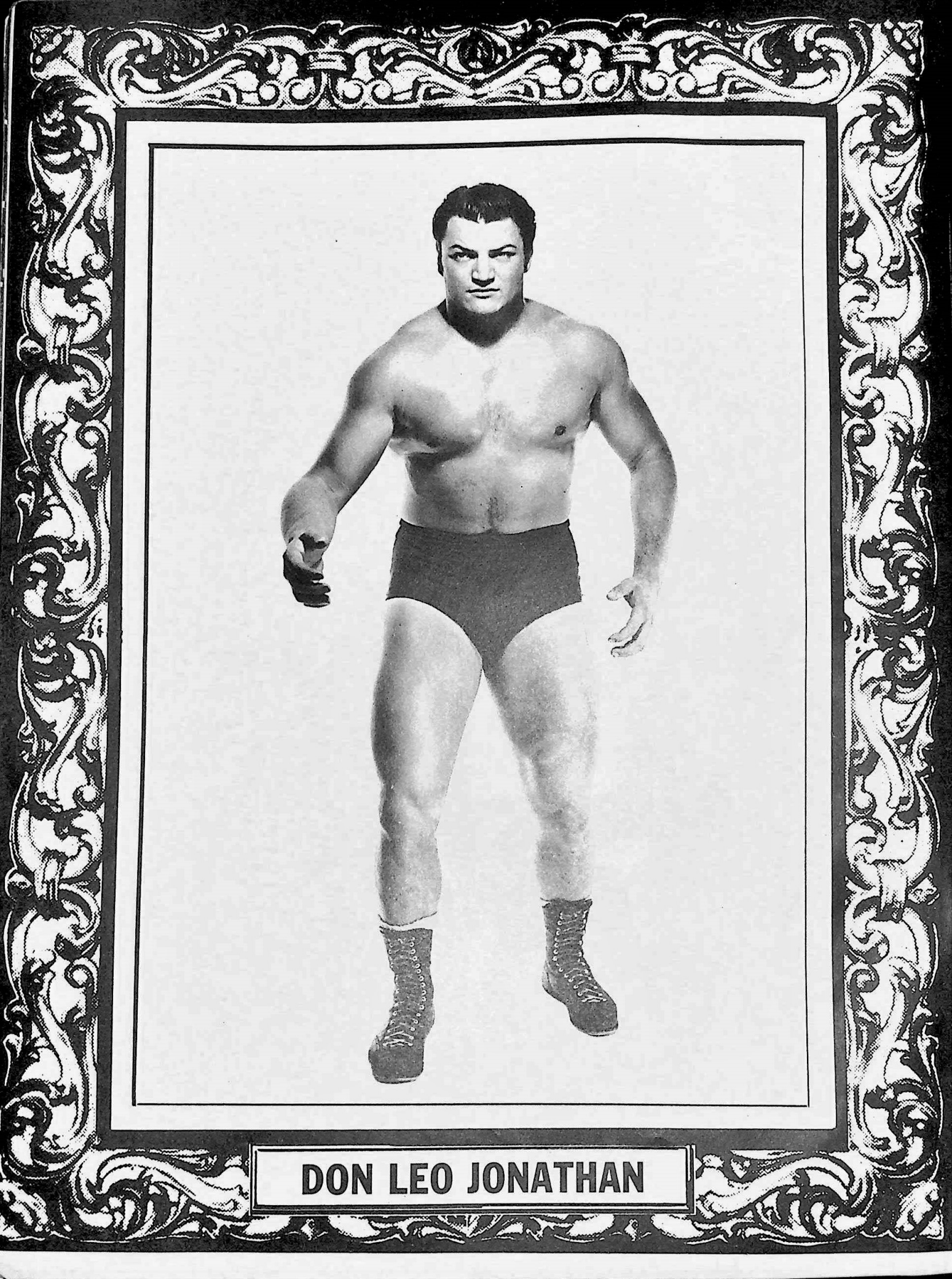
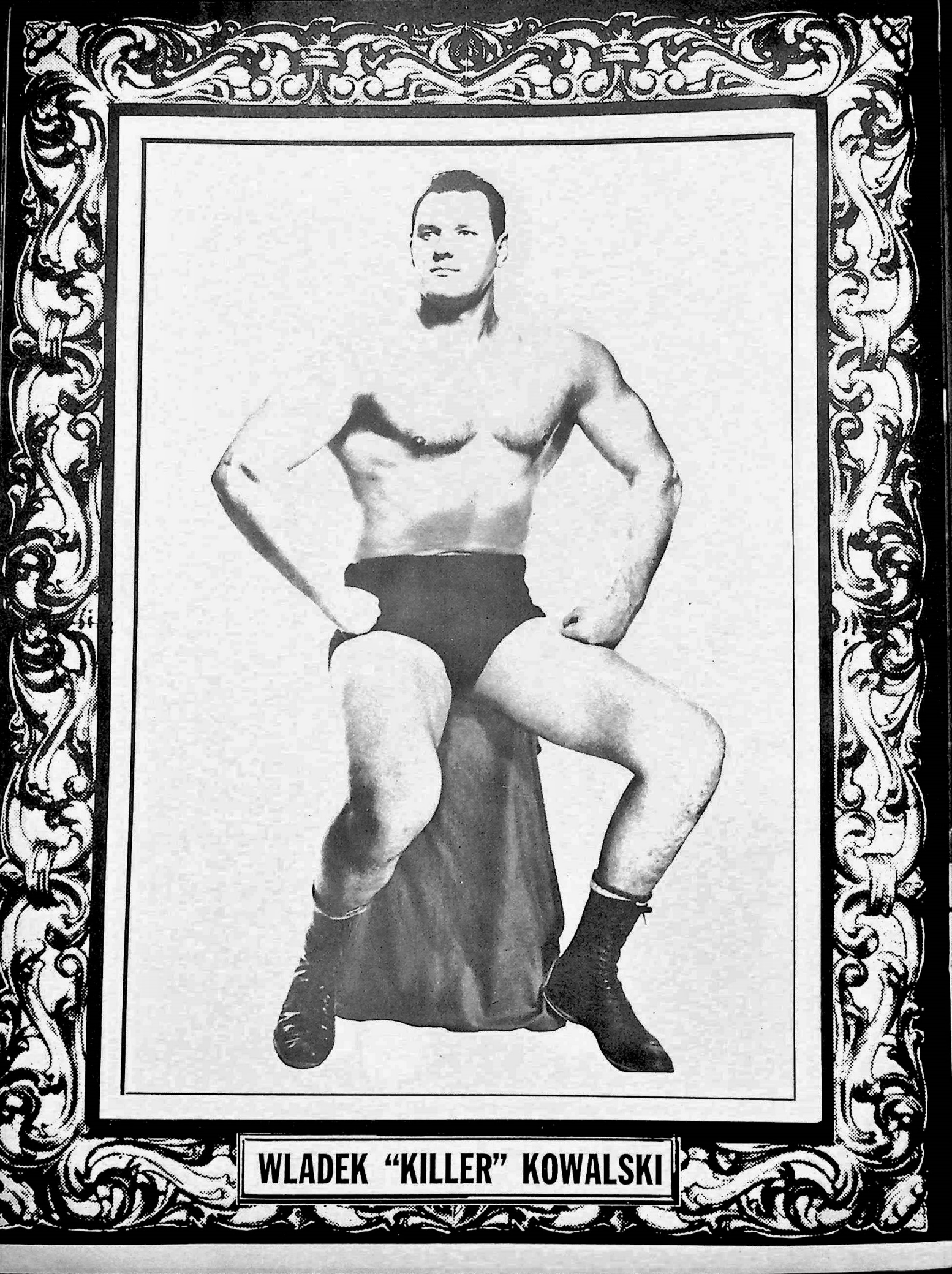
Each picture is framed in a Decorative Border

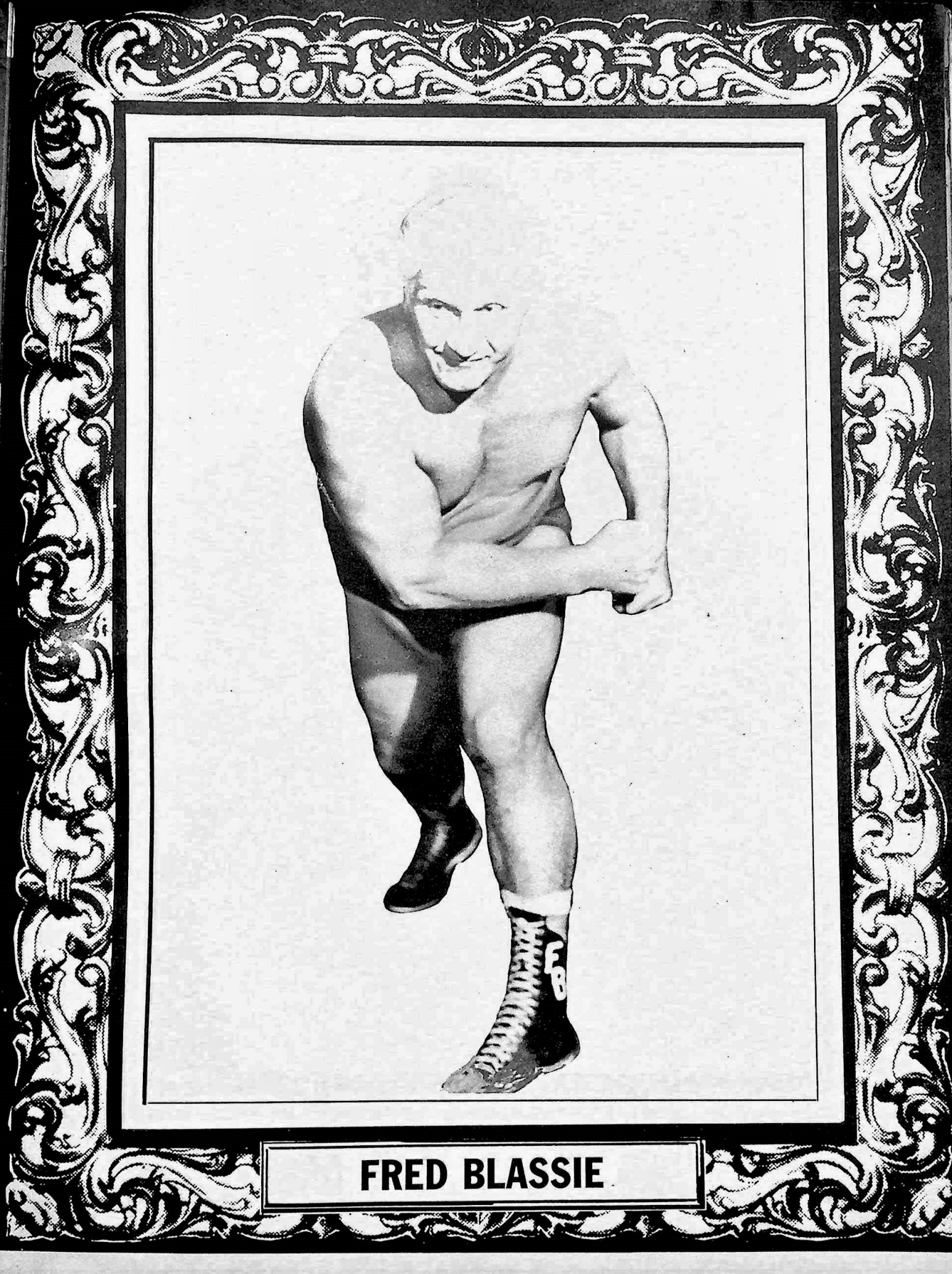


DON LEO JONATHAN

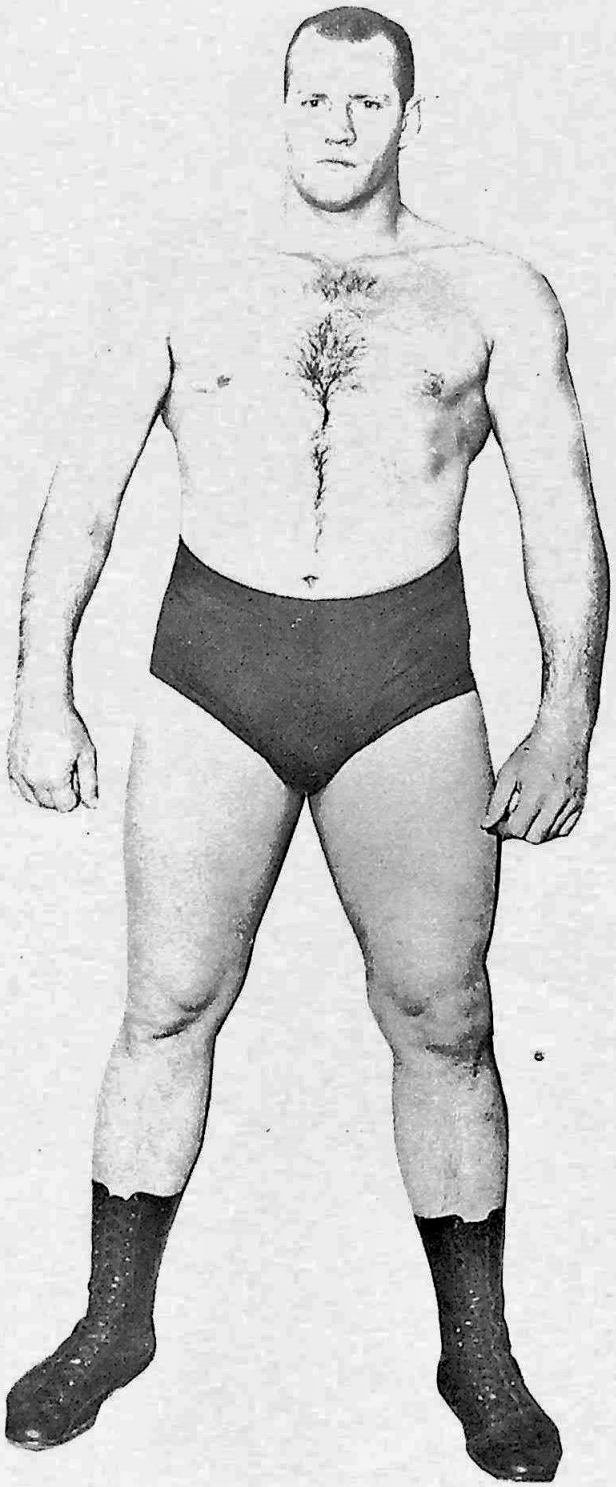
KARL VON HESS



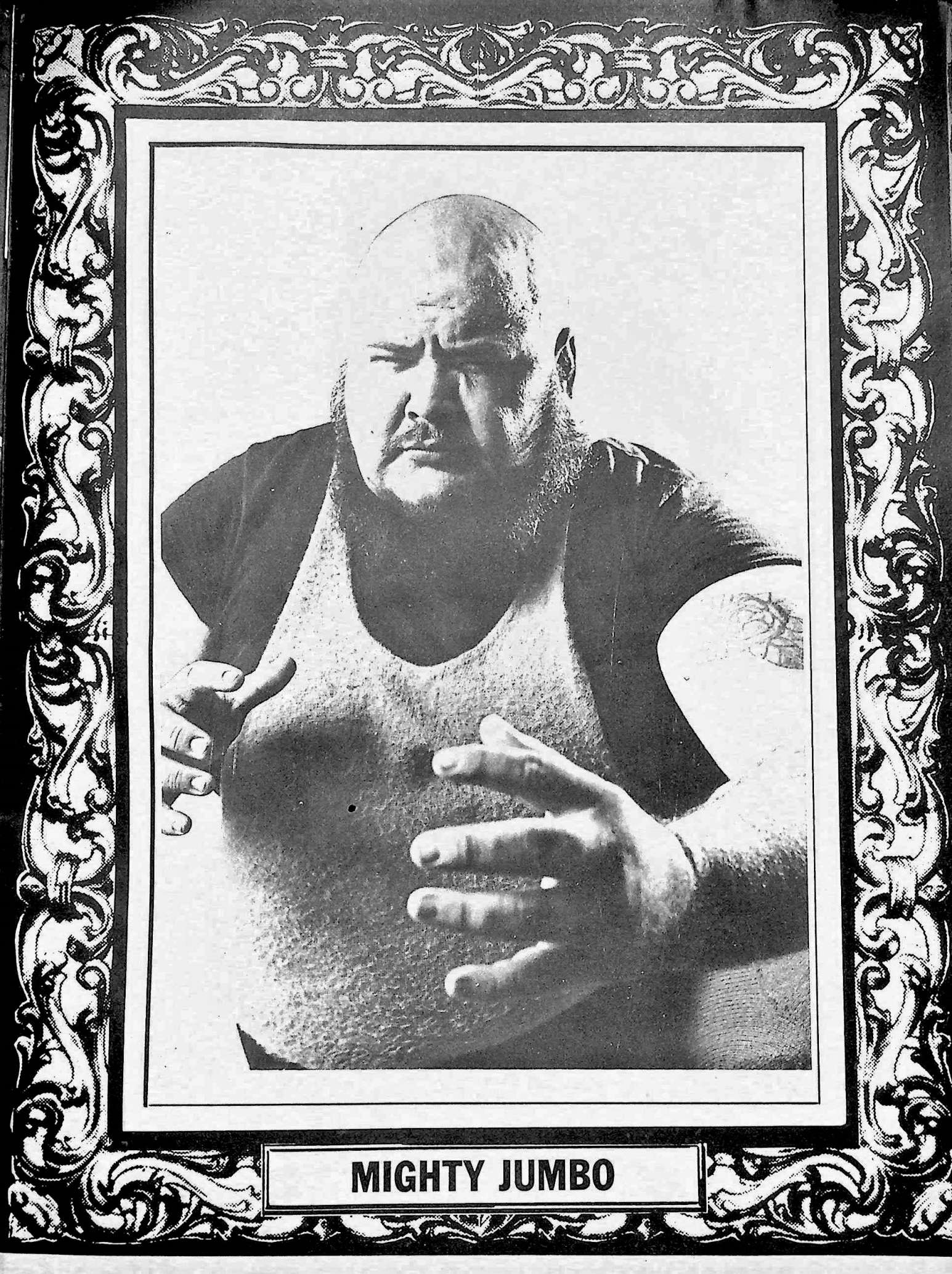
WLADEK "KILLER" KOWALSKI



FRED BLASSIE

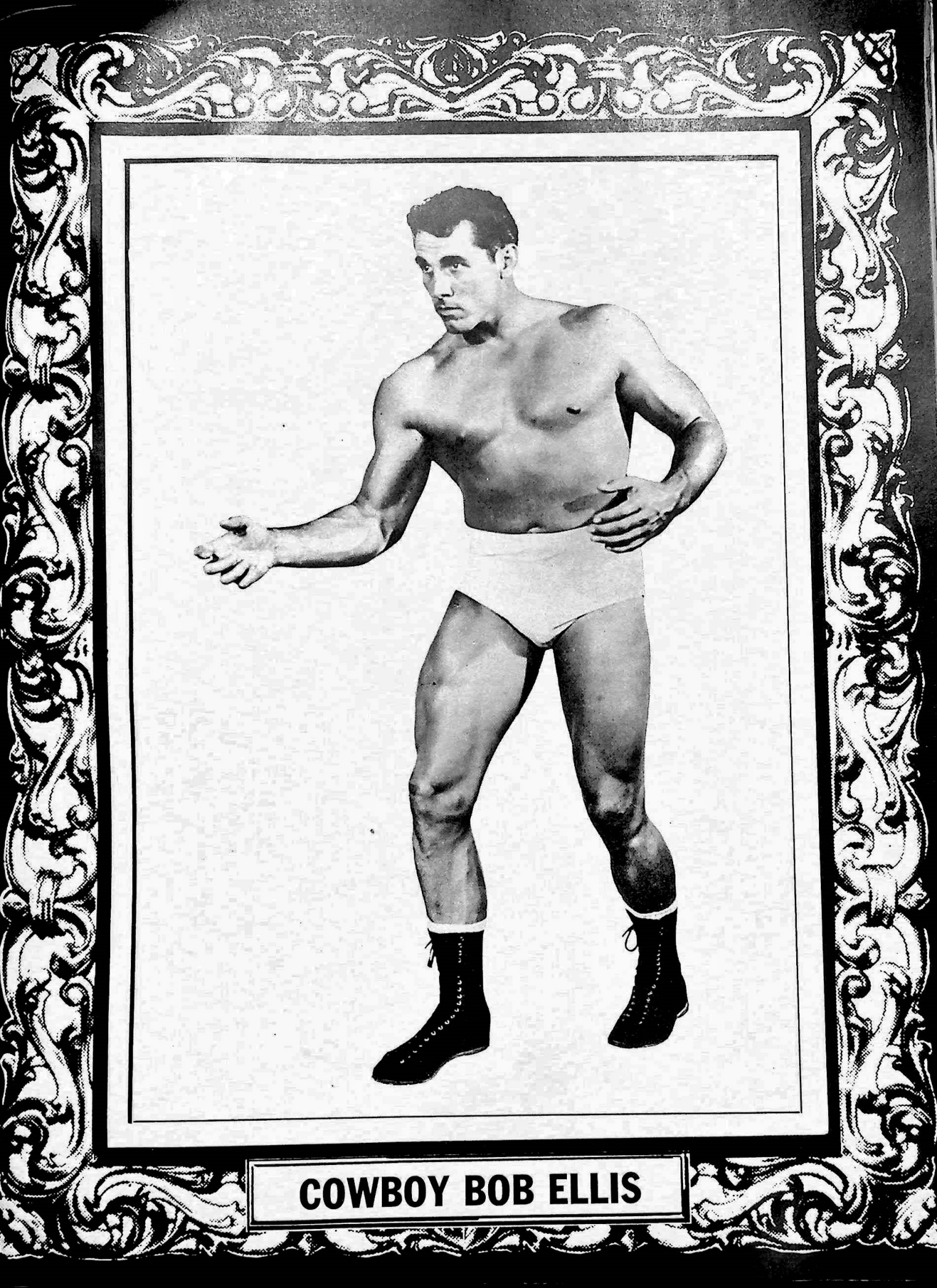


FRITZ VON ERIC



MIGHTY JUMBO

BULL CURRY



COWBOY BOB ELLIS

DON EAGLE

The Scalping of BOBBY WALLACE

Hilarious fun for everybody except the man who lost his head

BOBBY WALLACE ISN'T the best wrestler in the world. He isn't even the second best. But he can make things tough for almost anybody, and he's always ready to try. He did well around the south and east for several years, gaining a reputation for roughness.

Then he went to Texas. As readers of this magazine well know, Texas is no place to go unless you're willing to do as the Texans do. And Texans play *rough!*

Bobby didn't play rough enough. Mixed in with unholy terrors like Dory Funk, Bob Geigel and Eddie Graham, Bobby found himself in over his head. And that's where the story starts—with his head.

Bobby's head, a round, moon-shaped peninsula of flesh and bone protruding from a round, moon-shaped body, is —or was—covered with a two-foot shock of flaming red silken hair. On a girl it would have been attractive; on pudgy, mustachioed Bobby Wallace, it was grotesque. Dory Funk decided it had to go; however, Funk had no legal right to the hair. So he decided to give Bobby a haircut—the hard way.

"You've been asking for a return match," he said to Wallace. "Well, you've got one—on one condition. If you win, I'll give you a thousand dollars—" Wallace's round face lit up for a second, "—but if you lose, I give you a haircut in the ring!"

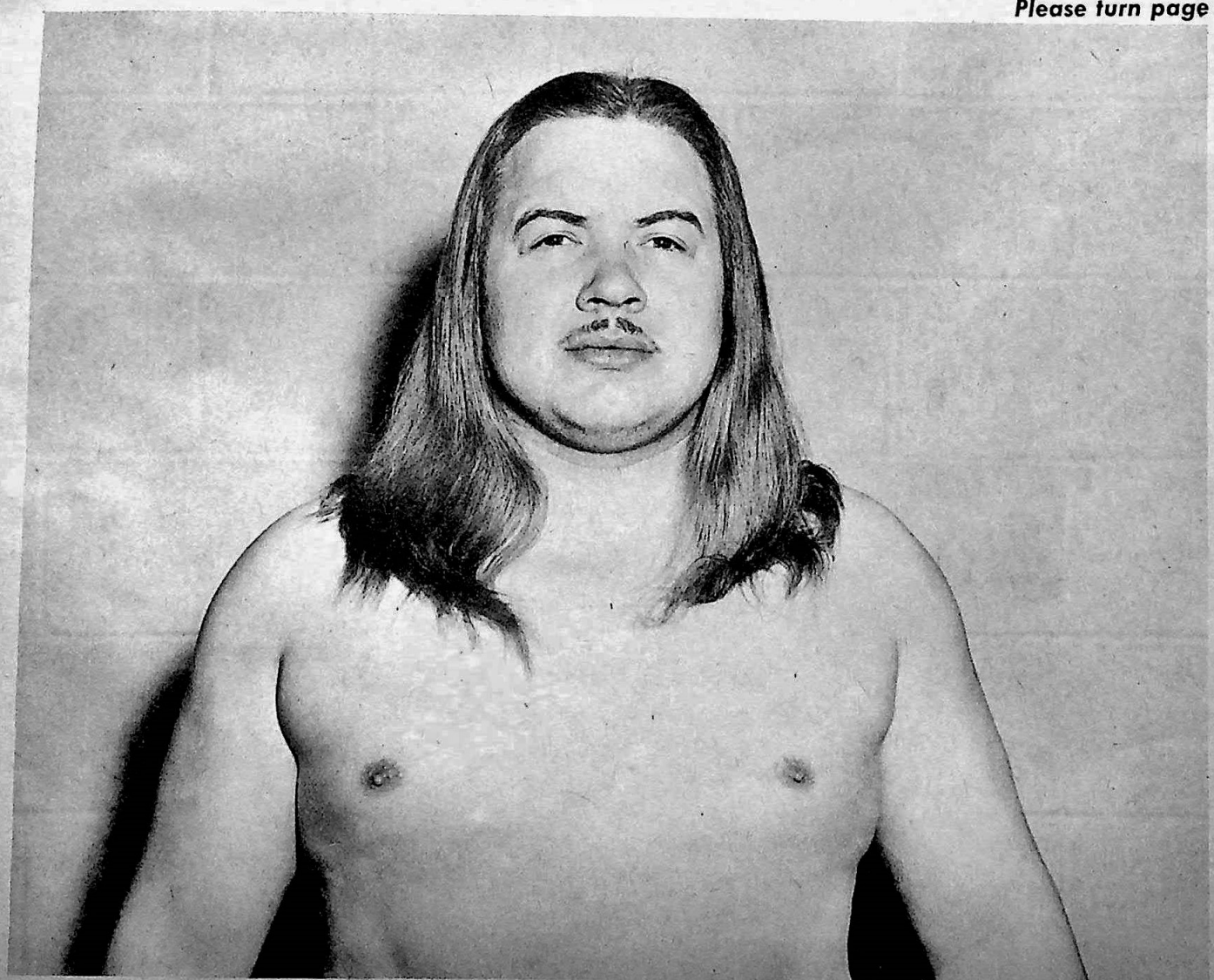
Wallace stopped smiling, but couldn't resist the challenge. Anyway, he couldn't resist the thought of that thousand. So it was all arranged.

He lost. But he lost good. For the joy of cutting Wallace's long scarlet tresses in public added strength to Funk's considerable beef. He wrecked Bobby.

A chair was brought to the middle of the ring. Bobby, making faces of pain and embarrassment, sat in it. Then the haircutting began. Aided and more or less abetted by Eddie Graham and a couple of other stalwarts brought in to hold down Wallace and prevent his escape, Dory did a thorough and professional job on the Wallace skull.

But let the pictures on these pages show just what happened. You might call it a *cut*-rate bargain—a wrestling match and a haircut—both for the price of one.

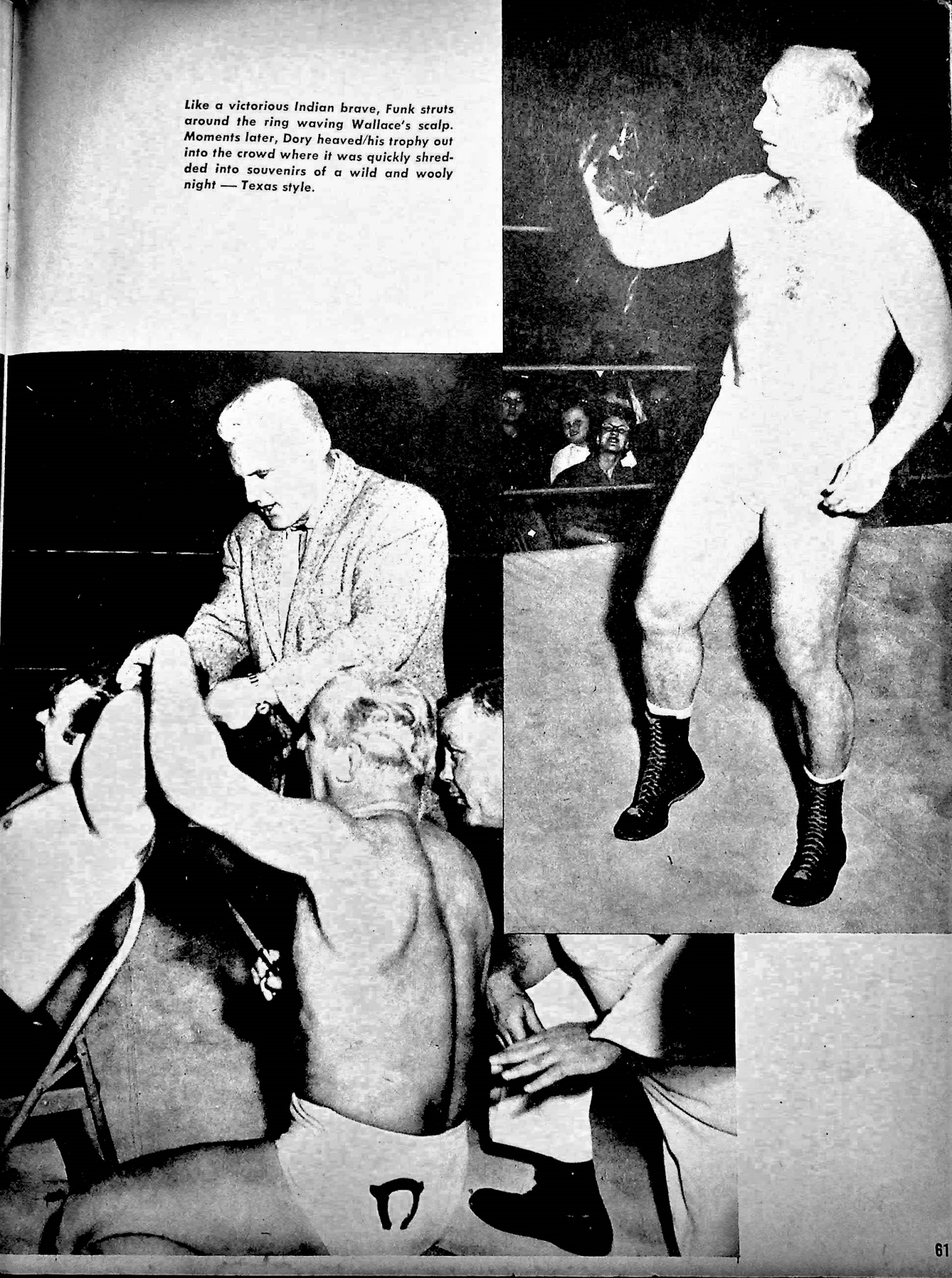
Please turn page →

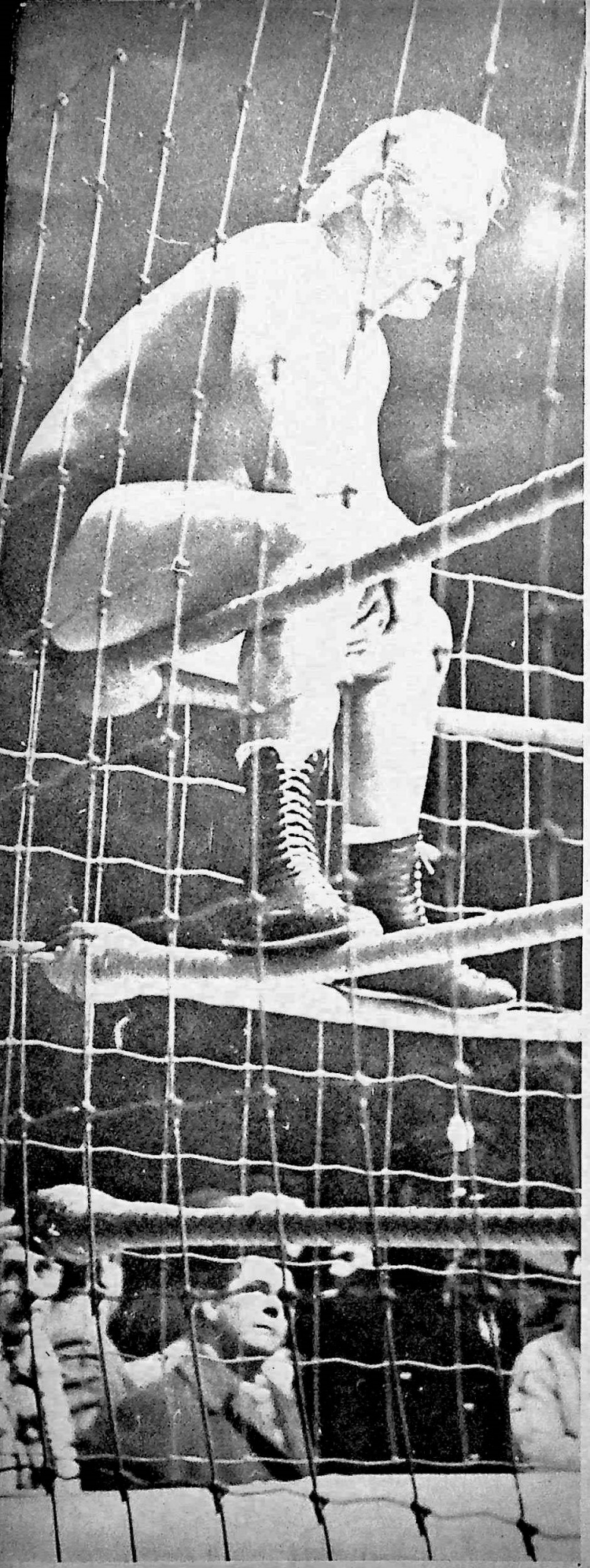


After losing bout to Dory Funk, Wallace pays penalty by submitting to haircut in the ring. Funk, in white trunks, begins to clip away as officials, in white shirts, look on. Eddie Graham, behind Funk, holds Bobby's squirming head for his friend Funk.

To torture Wallace still more, Graham yanks some hair that has not yet been cut. Bobby was so furious that he took a swing at Graham after it was all over, but it was too late, the damage had already been done.

Like a victorious Indian brave, Funk struts around the ring waving Wallace's scalp. Moments later, Dory heaved/his trophy out into the crowd where it was quickly shredded into souvenirs of a wild and wooly night — Texas style.





You've got to respect Nature Boy BUDDY ROGERS

The man who brought gaudy jackets and the walking strut to wrestling speaks his mind, then throws a bold challenge at Antonino Rocca.

BY STANLEY WESTON

THIS WAS IN MEMORIAL HALL in Columbus, Ohio one night last April. It was still half an hour before the main event was scheduled to go into the ring and the evening's star attraction, deep-chested Nature Boy Buddy Rogers, sat naked on the long bench that ran the length of the dimly-lit dressing room.

He sat alone in a corner, away from the others, in a kind of kingly privacy. Other wrestlers in the room sneaked admiring glances at him from the corners of their eyes. To wrestle on the same card with Buddy Rogers is an honor, to share the same dressing room with him is an historic event to any young wrestler. For Rogers is without doubt one of the, if not *the* greatest performer in wrestling today. When speaking of Buddy Rogers even the top stars refer to him as "the old pro" or "the master."

I walked over to where he sat. "Hi ya,' Dutch," I said.

He tossed back his head in a burst of laughter. "Dutch," he repeated, "nobody has called me that in years."

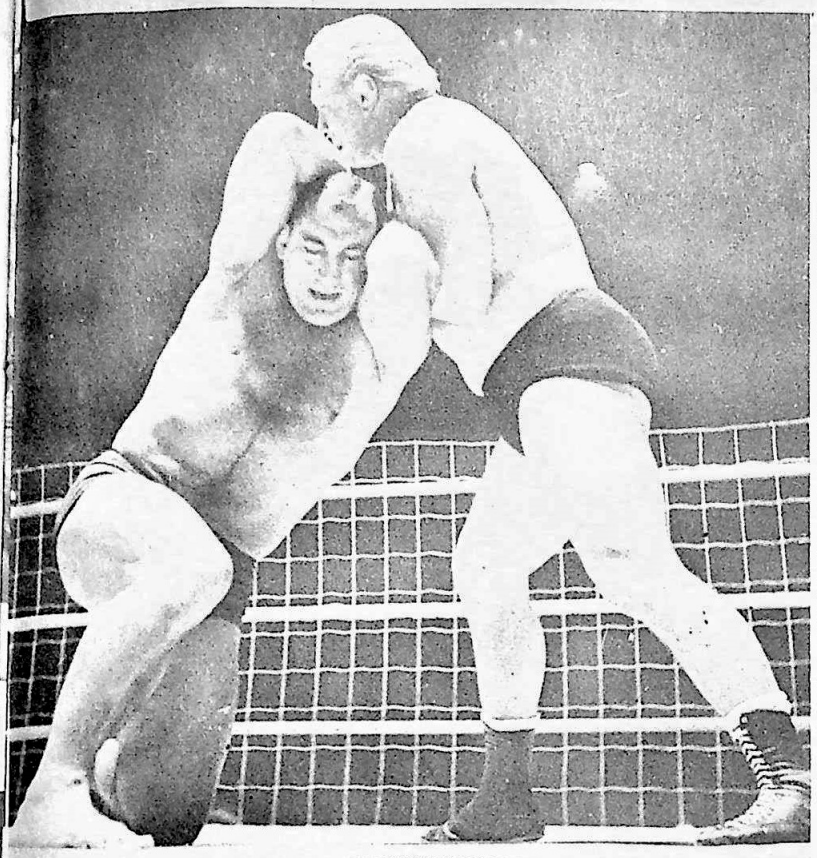
I remember when you wrestled under your real name, Herman "Dutch" Rhode, I said.

"Yeah," he sighed, "but that was so long ago. How many years was it? Seven, nine. God I'm getting old."

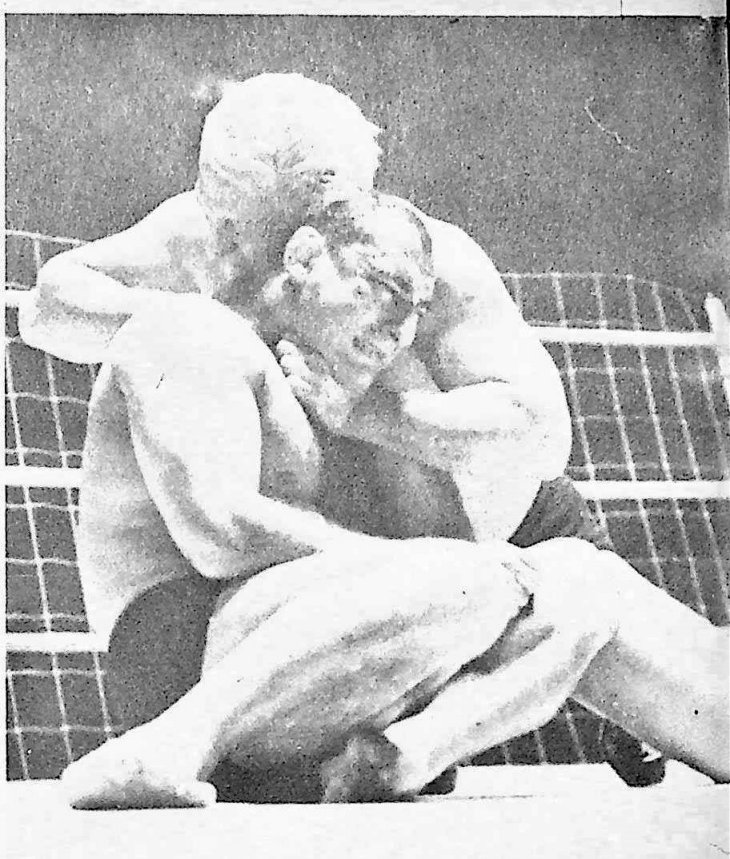
It was that long ago, I said.

Rogers picked a long black cigar from his suitcase and put a match to it. He seemed ashamed at the sloppy appearance of the suitcase so he tried to kick it shut with his foot. But it sprung open again and all his gear went flying across the floor.

"Sonofabitch!" he yelled as he tried to pick everything up at once and throw it back into the oversized aluminum



Buddy bends Rocca's arm during torrid bout in Montreal. Rogers was the aggressor through most of the match. He dazzled Rocca with an amazing assortment of leg locks, arm locks and spectacular tackles.



Rogers chokes Rocca, turning his head so that the referee cannot see. Ring was enclosed with wire fence to keep wrestlers inside. Bout lasted 40 minutes and ended in a draw.

case. Then he excused himself, sucked in a deep drag of smoke and leaned back against the wall. He gazed up at the ceiling like a man lost in his dreams. He said nothing for several moments. Then, finally, he pitched forward and with a strange mellowness in his voice said, "those were great days. Those early days of television when wrestling made its first big score with Papa, Mama and the kids right in their own living room."

I cut him off. "Yes, Buddy," I said, and to you must go most of the credit for making wrestling what it is today. You were the real pioneer of TV wrestling; its first big star. I can still remember those wars you had with Billy Darnell. They were the kind of matches you never forget. Even to this day I've never seen anything like them."

Rogers stuck out his hand and grinned. "Thanks," he said, "I didn't think anybody remembered."

He moved slowly to his feet and started to work the kinks from his muscles by doing knee bends and push-ups. Everything about him, every move he made was that of the real professional. His magnificent body is perfectly conditioned. His skin is a rich bronze color and his square shoulders jut out at hard right angles from the sides of his neck. With his light blond hair contrasting violently with the color of his skin he stands out in any group of people like the north star in the heavens.

He slipped a sheer black pair of underneath trunks over his bare body and began to rub Johnson baby oil into his chest, down his arms and then on his legs. "Oil makes you look good under the ring lights," he said, "and what's more important it lessens the danger of getting mat boils when you scrape your skin on the dirty canvas."

I mentioned the name of Antonino Rocca for some reason which I can't now remember. When Rogers heard the name he put down the baby oil. The look of contentment left his face. Now he looked angry and tense.

"Rocca!" he growled, "that's a word that we don't say around here."

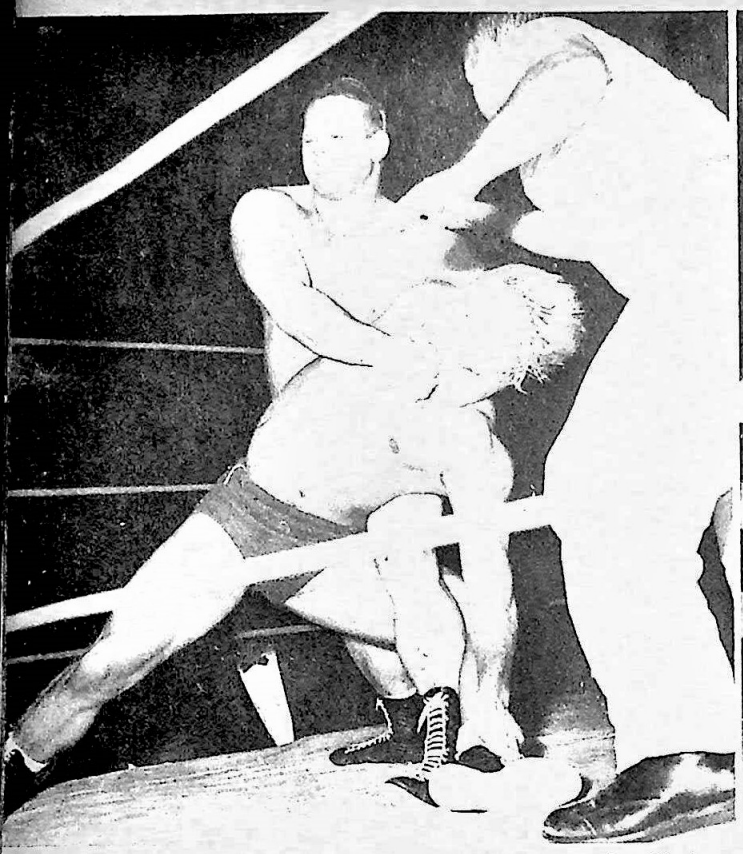
I was stunned by his violent reaction. Before I could ask why, Rogers explained: "I've had it in for that big ape for years," he said. "He kept ducking me and ducking me. I challenged him I'll bet a thousand times. Every now and then he'd finally agree to wrestle me. But always at the last minute he'd find some excuse to duck out of the match."

He walked to the open window at the far end of the room and stared out into the darkness. Then he spun around and looked me squarely in the eye. "You're a writer," he said, "and you want a story. Well, I'll give you one. A big one. It's about Rocca and me. It's a challenge I'm going to make. A challenge to your great Rocca."

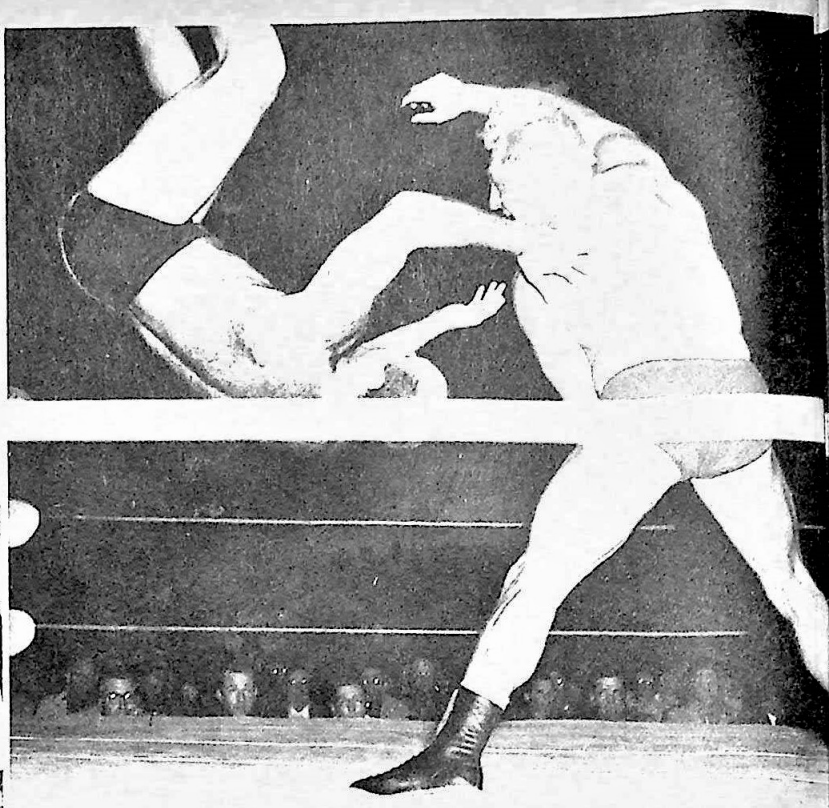
I pulled out a pad to write down his exact words. He fired his dead cigar and blew a puff of bluish smoke toward the ceiling. "You know that hold Rocca calls the 'backbreaker'?" I nodded that I did.

"Rocca claims that no man can get out of his backbreaker. Well, I'll let him clamp me across his shoulders in that hold and I'll bet him $10,000 to $10 that I get out of it in less than ten seconds. Those are pretty good odds. Wouldn't you say?"

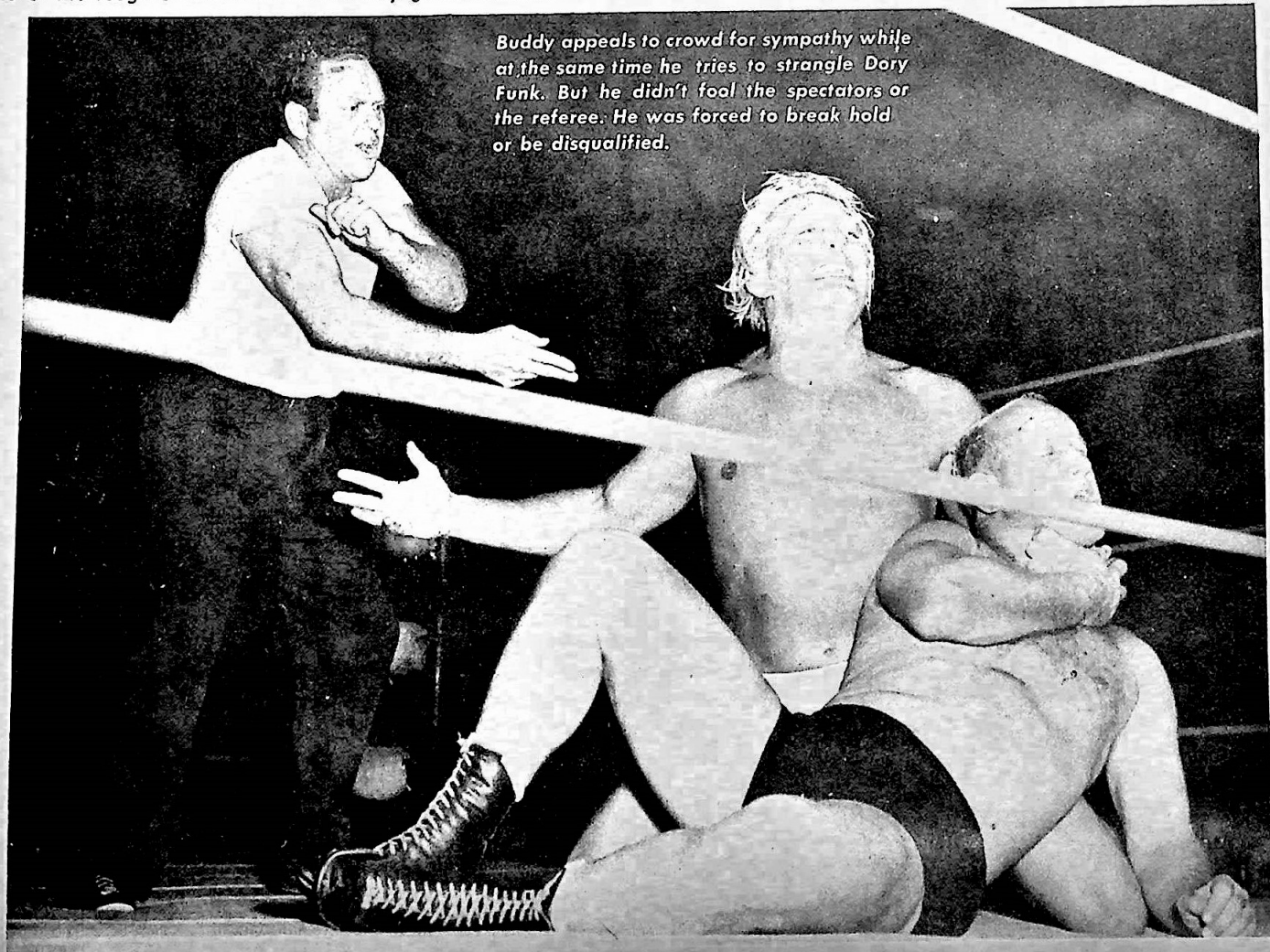
They certainly are, I said. *(continued on next page)*



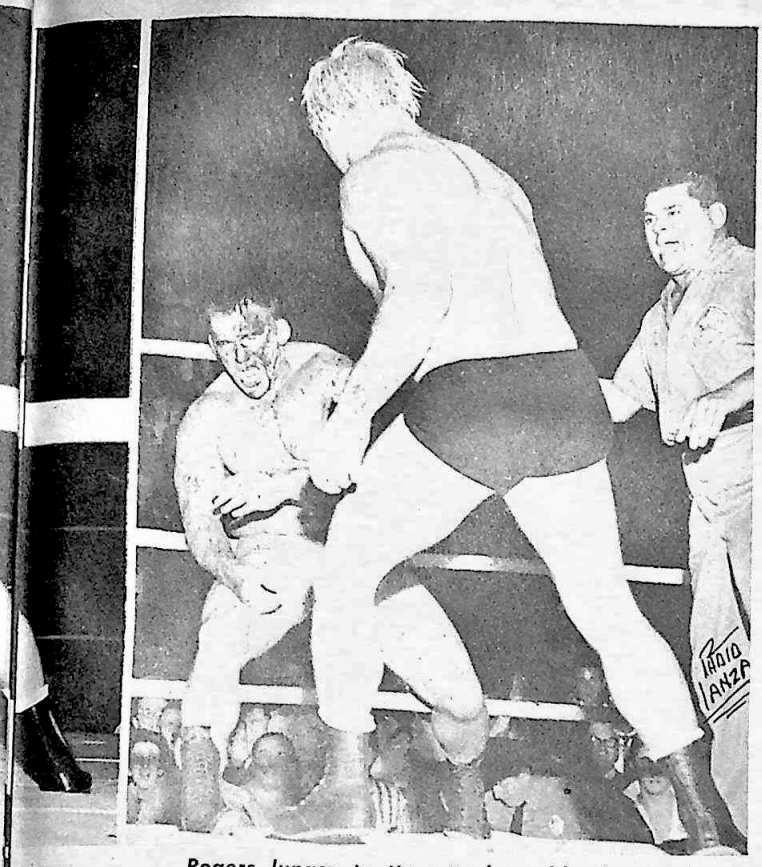
After being held firmly in Dick Hutton's mighty headlock, Rogers finally breaks free. Buddy calls the powerful Hutton "one of the toughest men I faced. A really great wrestler."



Rogers looks like a classic Greek statue as he flips Bob Geigel across the ring during bout in Amarillo, Texas. Buddy is a master showman who adapts his style to fit the occasion — any occasion.



Buddy appeals to crowd for sympathy while at the same time he tries to strangle Dory Funk. But he didn't fool the spectators or the referee. He was forced to break hold or be disqualified.



Rogers lunges to the attack as blood-covered Edouard Carpentier sags against the ropes to keep from falling. Buddy was disqualified.

Comparison pictures of Buddy Rogers show changes in his appearance over a thirteen year period. Photo at left was taken in October of 1947.

"You bet your life they are," he shot back.

"But that's not all," Rogers continued, "After I get out of his back-breaker I want to clamp a double leg lock on him. Then I'll make him another bet—same odds, $10,000 to $10 that he doesn't get out of my hold."

He walked over to the open window again and drew in a deep breath of cool night air. Then he smiled and asked: "think Rocca will take me up on those bets?"

I don't know, I said. But he's a very proud man. I'll write the story just as you've told it to me and I'll print the challenge word for word. Rocca will read it. The rest is up to him. If he wants to take you up on it, he can call me at my office and then I'll call you. From there we'll work out the details.

Buddy shook his head. "That sounds fine," he said. "I don't see how he can do anything but accept."

The longer you talk to Rogers the more convinced you are that there is only one like him in the whole world. He is an individualist, a man who has tremendous, unwavering confidence in himself, and a kind of cockiness. He takes orders from nobody, asks no one's advice, and does exactly what he pleases.

He pulled on his red ring tights then took a magnificent multi-colored jacket from his suitcase. He held the jacket out at arm's length and told me to feel the weight. I took it and it was so heavy that I dropped it. He burst into laughter. "Heavy, eh," he said like a kid who just pulled a Halloween joke.

It sure is, I said. Must weigh at least 25 pounds.

He slipped the jacket on and started to parade around the room in that famous strut of his. The same strut known to wrestling fans the world over. The same strut countless other wrestlers have tried to imitate. How does he feel when he sees other wrestlers stealing his stuff?

"Hell," he said, "I don't mind, because everytime one of those clowns struts around the ring, or wears one of the type jackets I originated years ago, I know the bum feels in his heart that he stole the whole routine from me. I'm the original and you have no idea what satisfaction knowing that gives me. Don't ever forget that there can be a million copies of anything but there is only one original."

"Like the Mona Lisa?" I said

"Yes," he said, "just like the Mona Lisa."

Promoter Al Haft walked into the room. "Your on in about two minutes, Buddy," Haft said. The wrestler nodded then walked over to the broken mirror on the wall. He started to comb his golden hair and when he had each strand in position he cockily threw the comb against the wall and started to strut out of the room. But before he walked out the door he whirled around and with a smug grin on his face said: "that's all I need to take this guy tonight, a hair comb. Maybe to take Rocca apart I'll have to get a shave, too."

The door closed behind him. There was silence for about a minute. Then a deafening roar drifted back into the dressing room where I remained. I knew Buddy Rogers was in the ring and I thought to myself how lucky these people in Ohio are to have the greatest showman in the business living and working in their state. • *end*

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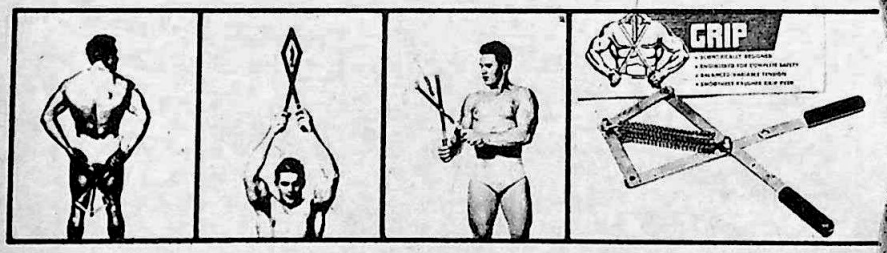

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A Heavy Bet on Haystacks

Haystacks is slugged on the back of his head by Neilson as he leaves the ring.

ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT, Haystacks Calhoun is a big man. Not only is he big physically, he's also a decent guy. So it's understandable that he should get peeved when Art Nielson slugged him over the head with a board. In fact, he got downright angry.

It happened one day in Houston, Texas. Until recently the largest state in the Union, Texas likes its wrestlers big. And rough! That's why they like both Haystacks Calhoun and Nielson. One's big and the other's rough. When Art hit Haystacks with the board, the crowd didn't know who to cheer—so they just sat back to listen to the argument. They heard Haystacks complain to the cops and to anybody else who would listen that when a man finishes a wrestling match he should be finished for the night. So why should Nielson carry a grudge out of the ring and hit him with a board? And just because Haystacks whipped him. Everybody saw Nielson follow Calhoun up the aisle, grab the board and *wham!*—hit Haystacks on the sconce. "He should be fined, or barred from Texas!" said Calhoun.

"Don't talk that way to me, you sack of lard, or I'll toss you on your anterior!" That's what Nielson said.

"I'll bet you a hundred bucks you couldn't toss me on my anterior or posterior the longest day you live!" That's what Haystacks said.

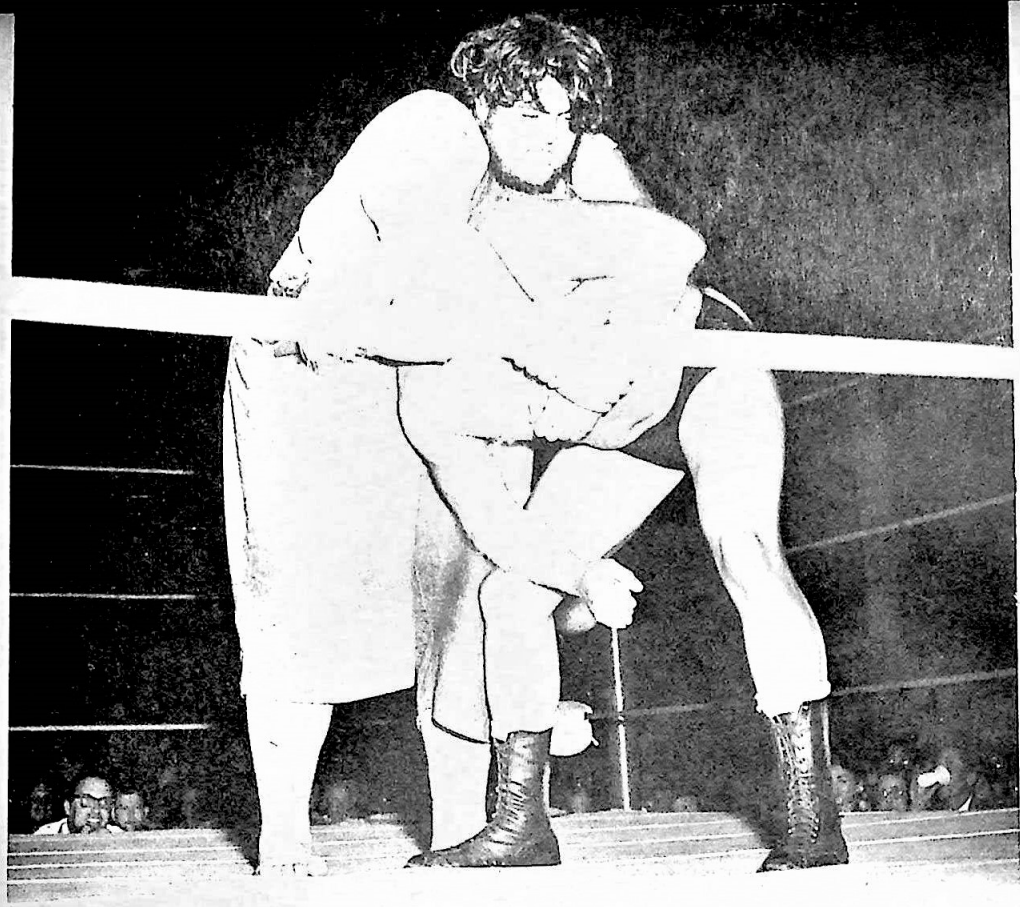
Nielson was about to try to win that hundred, right there in the aisle of the auditorium. He leaped forward.

Just in time, Morris Siegal, the Houston promoter, leaped between them, at risk of being jellified between the Calhoun anterior and the Nielson fist. "Wait, fellas," Siegal yipped, "if you hurt any of these people you'll have me closed up like a Broadway theater. Why don't you both come back next week and throw each other out of the ring? That way, we'll all get paid for it—and not get me closed up like a—"

Nielson clapped Morris on the back, all but snapping his scapula. "We'll do it—won't we, you big sack of lard?" He was looking at Haystacks when he said it. Haystacks nodded.

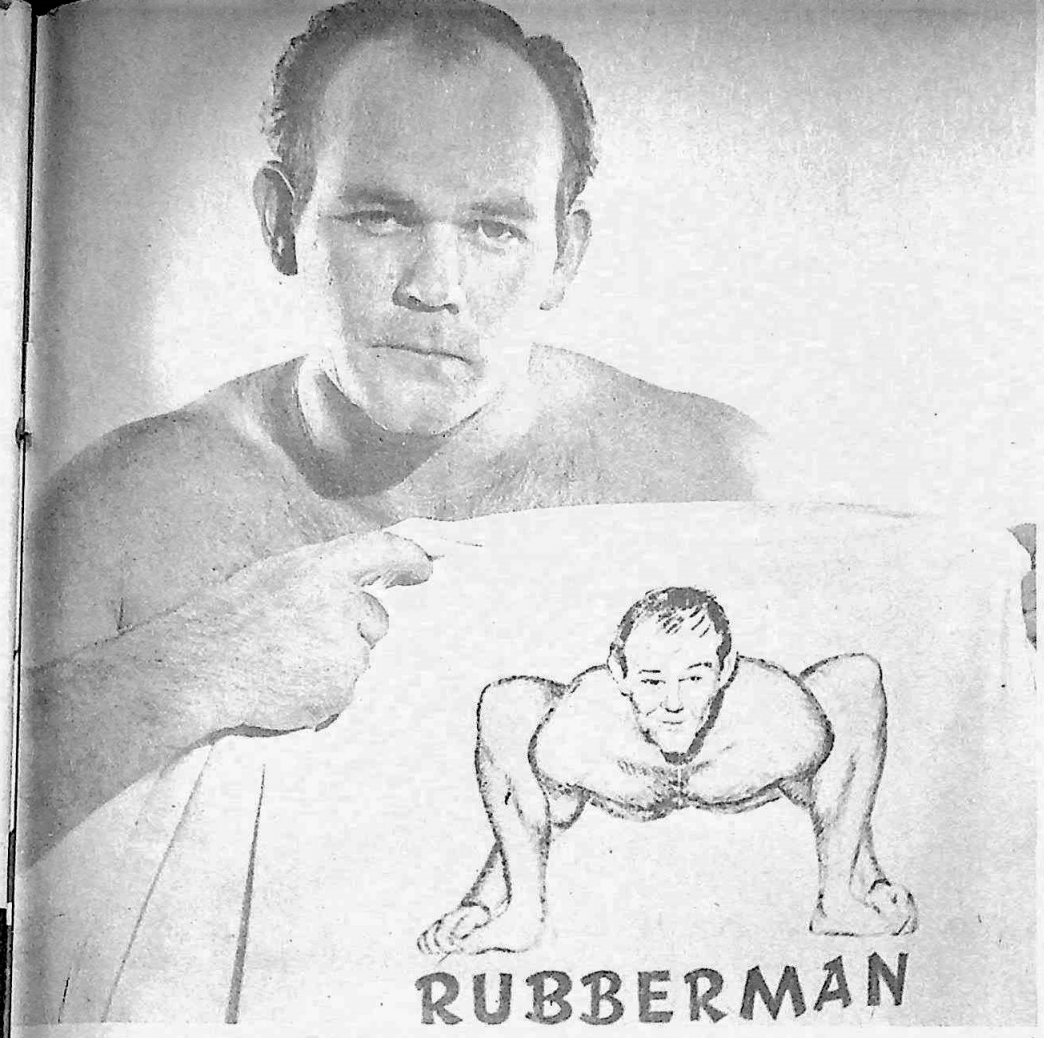
So they came back, the following week. If Nielson could throw Haystacks, who weighs 640 pounds—400 more than Art—then he stood to collect $100. Since very few had ever tossed Calhoun, Nielson had a big job on his hands. A 640-pound job.

TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED, TURN THE PAGE▶



During the first few minutes of their bout, Neilson tried every trick he knew to knock the massive Calhoun to the floor. Here he tries a hip-lock, without success.

Finally, after eleven minutes of complete frustration, the perfect opportunity arose. Haystacks was off balance while Neilson was in the ideal position. He grabbed the giant around the neck and flipped him over. The whole ring quivered when Calhoun landed.



TWISTS AND SQUIRMS

BY THE AMAZING JOHNNY WALKER

SOMETIMES IT TAKES A thorough medical examination to find out about a man. As was revealed some time ago, the doctors discovered that Boxer Archie Moore isn't a man at all—he's a robot. Now they have come up with another equally startling finding:

Johnny Walker is made of neither whiskey nor rubber! He's all man.

He could have fooled us—along with thousands of wrestling fans who have watched the incredible Walker ooze and bounce out of intricate holds that had ruined many a top-notch wrestler. The last time we saw Walker in action—if you can call it that; "traction" is a better way to describe his ring work, he was frustrating poor Chief Big Heart so badly that the usually placid Indian brave went berserk and actually slugged the willowy slide-winder from Georgia. This shook poor Walker—and the audience—so much that the bout was suspended for several seconds. Then the Chief offered his hand in apology. Walker took it—along with the entire arm—action was resumed. Big Heart finally won the match by getting Johnny in the one and only hold he admits he can't escape — the deadly Sleeper, which the Chief executes expertly.

Johnny Walker is a capable contortionist who brought a new twist to the wrestling business. The flexible flyer, getting nowhere as a contortionist only, or a truck driver or an elevator operator, decided to make use of his natural strength. Combining it with his amazing contortions, he has developed a unique style (to say the least) that is fun, and often thrilling, to watch.

Johnny is a pleasant-looking guy in his mid-twenties who knows better than to have any illusions of grandeur about his new profession. After three years as a professional wrestler, he has a good living assured; and he knows enough about wrestling, aside from the extra twist, to keep up interest in himself and in his gyrations. But he doesn't figure to become champion and he doesn't lose any sleep worrying about it.

"I think you'd have to call me a good wrestler, by now," Johnny says honestly, "but I'm not going to try to take on a Lou Thesz or a Killer Kowalski for the big prize." But, even as he speaks, he hesitates. "On the other hand, I've licked a lot of guys. Suppose I stick to wrestling for another five years. I'll still be young and much improved as a wrestler. Maybe good enough to—"

Walker didn't finish his thought. However, we can safely say that, as of this moment, his ambitions have changed somewhat. The idea has been growing, slowly, in his mind. He knows that no contortionist can ever hope to reach the top in wrestling. But a good wrestler—who's also a contortionist — might. All he has to do is keep sliding out of holds until his opponent tires—or leaves himself open. Then—

We'll have to wait awhile. Johnny Walker may yet prove to be a formidable figure among the top ten—instead of an interlude of comic relief. He's good enough to warrant this wait-and-see attitude.

Maybe we won't have too long to wait before we see.

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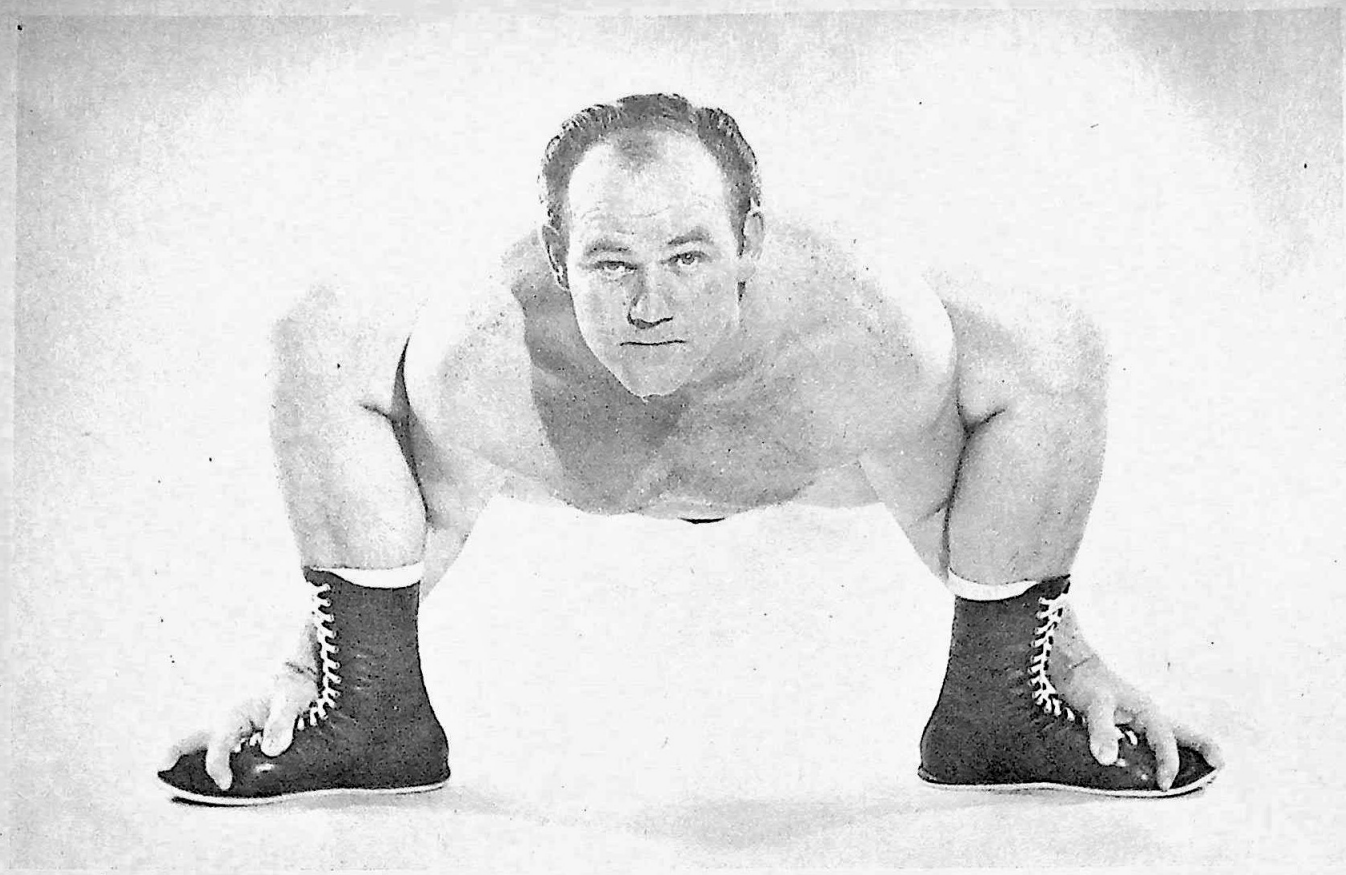
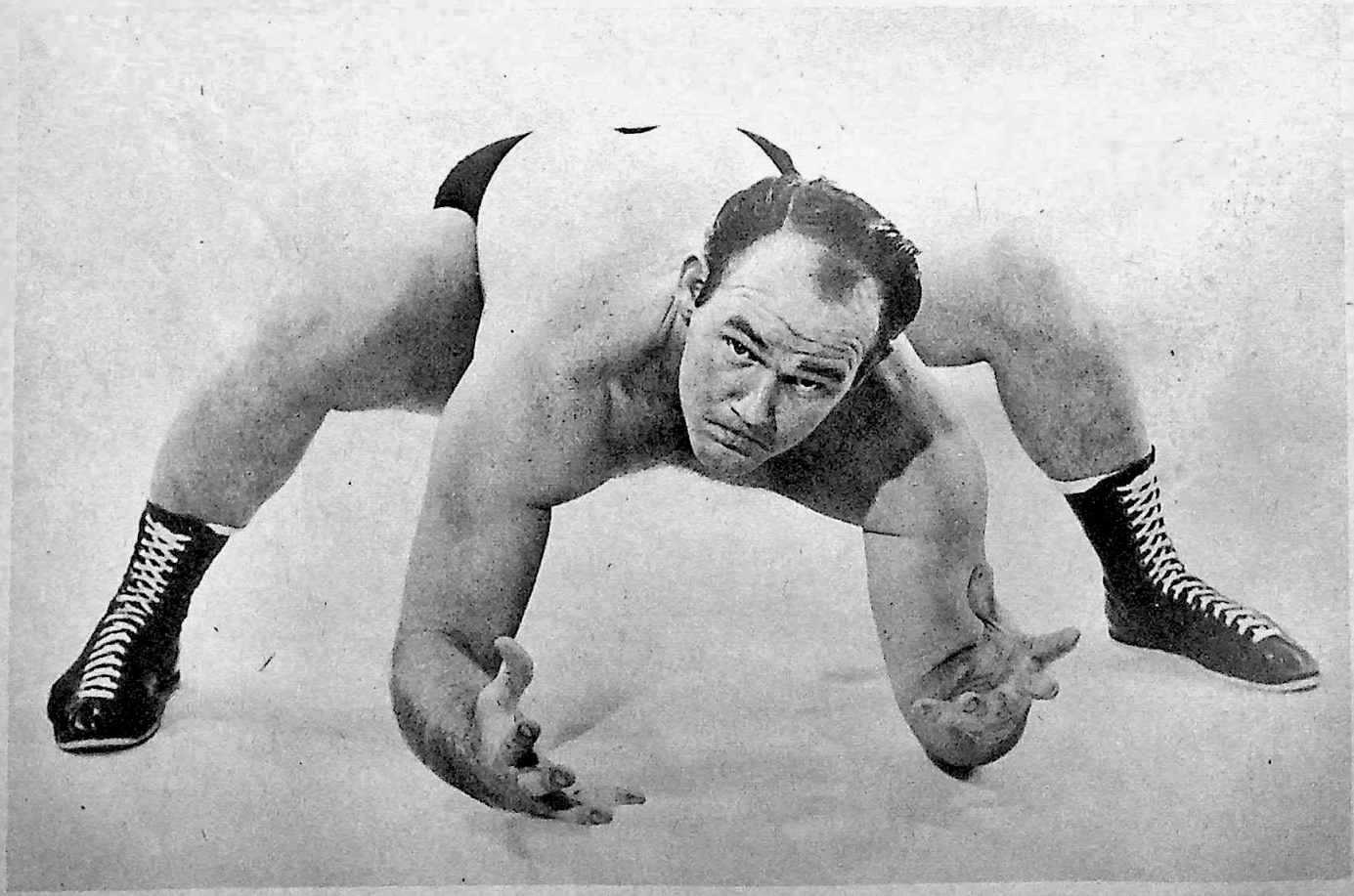
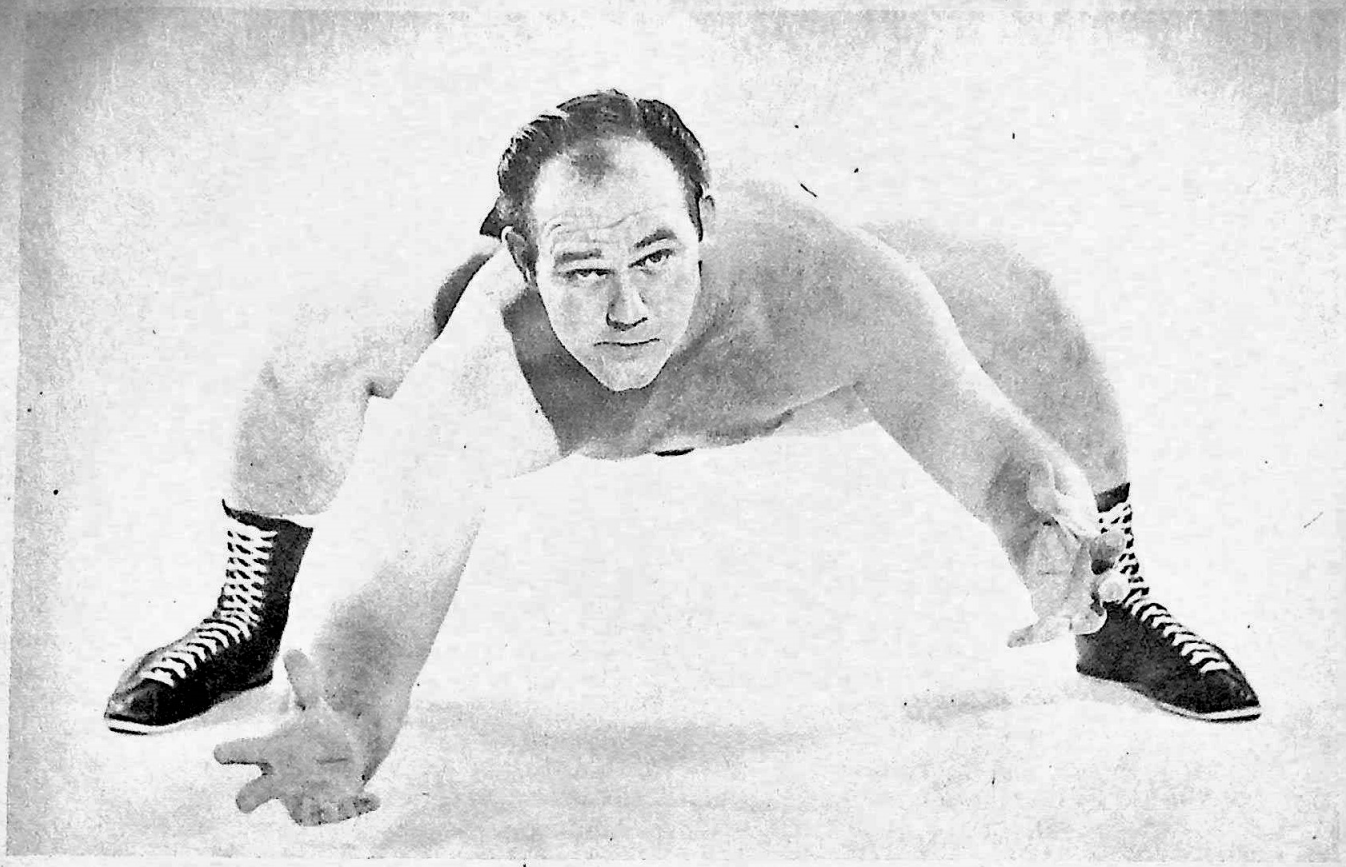


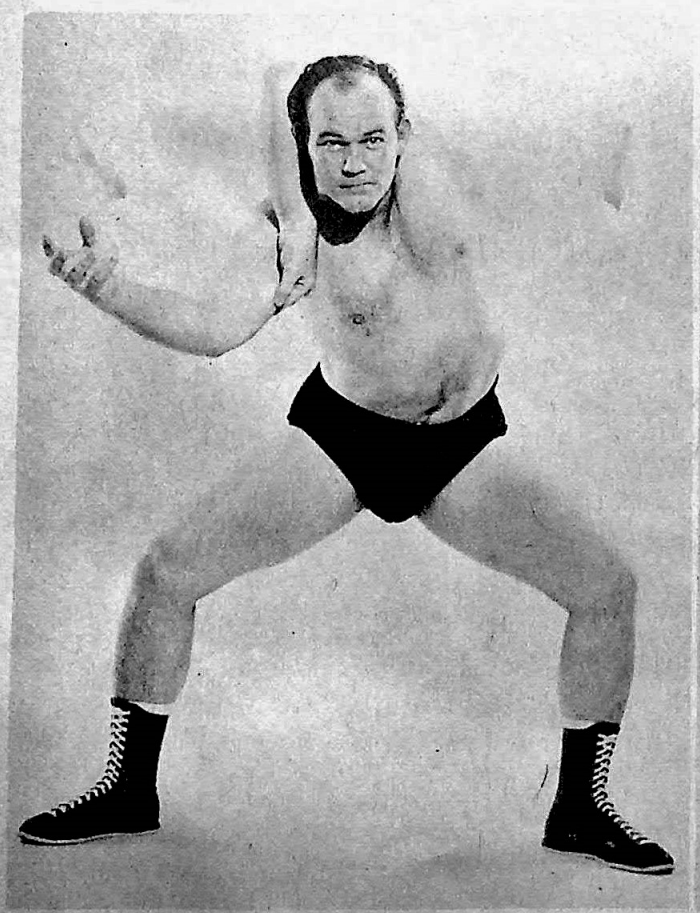
Walker looks like a spider as he wraps hands around his feet and walks toward camera as he often does in the ring.



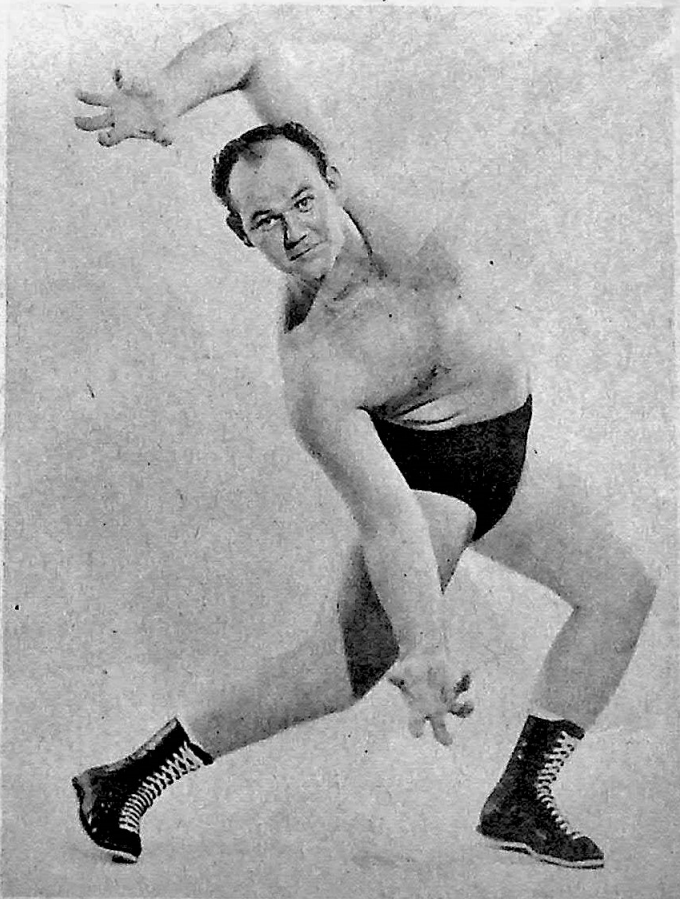
Johnny spreads his legs and bends so far over that his elbows touch the floor as he strikes weird wrestling pose.



This is the way Walker looks to his opponents. He can bend and twist his body into seemingly impossible contortions.



Johnny demonstrates the amazing flexibility of his arms, the reason it is impossible to hold him in a full nelson.



Walker can attack from any angle. Here he shows how he twists from normal squareoff pose to confuse opponents.

HADY

(*continued from page* 31)

He didn't have to. Since he was too young to fly—and too poor—Jim decided to get away from the mines anyway. He had, even at 14, a strongly-muscled body, so he took advantage of it. His agile brain caught on quickly to the more scientific aspects of wrestling, so that by the time he was 16, he had two years of amateur experience, and he looked very professional. The same Jack Britton who discovered Jim Bernard (The Brute), and a lot of other fine mat talent, got a look at Hady during a Pennsylvania amateur tournament. Britton knew he had another important discovery.

Britton also knew that the tough part would be getting Hady to move to Detroit, where Jack had his office. He cornered Hady in the dressing room one night.

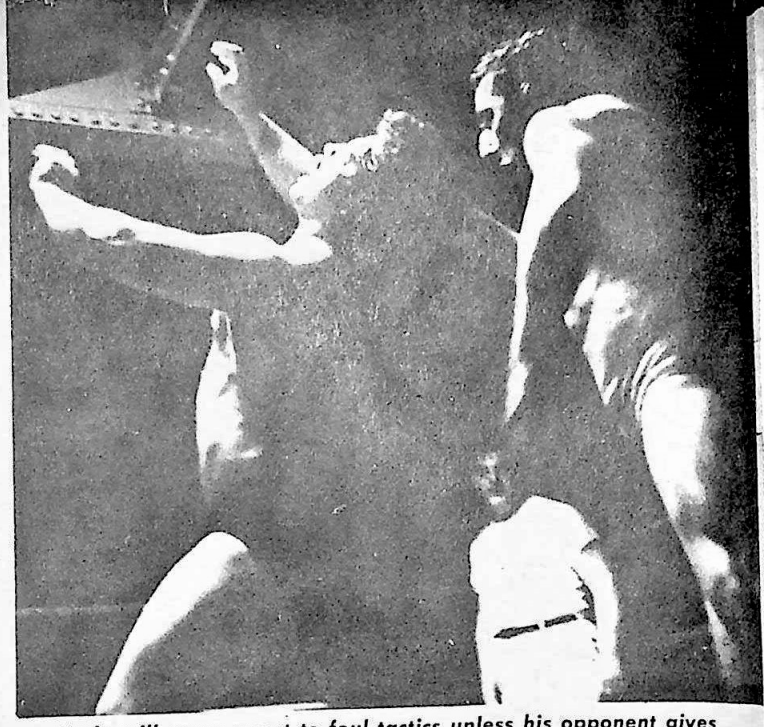
"Jim," began Britton cautiously, "I want to talk to you about your future. What would you like to—?"

Jim Hady pointed to the suit case near his locker. "It's all packed. Soon as I heard you'd be here tonight, I said goodbye to my folks—just in case you asked me to move."

Next day, Hady was established at the Eddystone Hotel, Detroit's wrestling headquarters.

The would-be flyer had taken off.

Jim hasn't landed yet. And that's what worries Jack Britton a little. "He's been at this business for ten years," the promoter frowns. "Sure, he's big in Detroit and the Midwest. Sure, he's been in practically every one of the 50 states—they liked him all over—and he's even made tours of Europe. He's been big time for a long time. And he's only 26." Jack shook his head. "I'm not saying he's gone as far as he can go, understand. I'm just saying it's time he took another giant step. It's time his name became a household word—like Rocca, the Grahams, the Bastiens or Kowalski. Whenever those guys walk down the street—in *any* town—people point and holler, 'There goes Rocca or Red Bastien' and they run for his autograph. If Hady walked down a street in New York, the most he could expect would be for people to look at his ears and say, 'Gee, he must be a wrestler.' That's not enough for a guy with all his talent."



Hady will never resort to foul tactics unless his opponent gives him good cause. Ricky Cortez, left, gave him good cause and he regretted it through the remainder of the furious bout.

Britton is right. We watched young Hady in the semi-final at Flint wrestling his old enemy, Ricky Cortez, a young man who seems to go berserk at the smell of resin. They put on a bout that, for thrills, excitement and skill, has rarely been equalled by the biggest names that ever graced Madison Square Garden. Hady, in winning, proved himself worthy of a Top Ten rating. Since you were never sure from one minute to the next what Hady would do, you were kept in a constant state of anticipation. Generally, what he did was more thrilling than what you expected!

What, then, keeps Jim Hady from being a "household word"?

Himself. He has been described as shy, retiring, backward, modest, cautious, anti-social, diffident, bashful, and, yes, even fearful. *Outside* the ring. We talked to Jim himself about it.

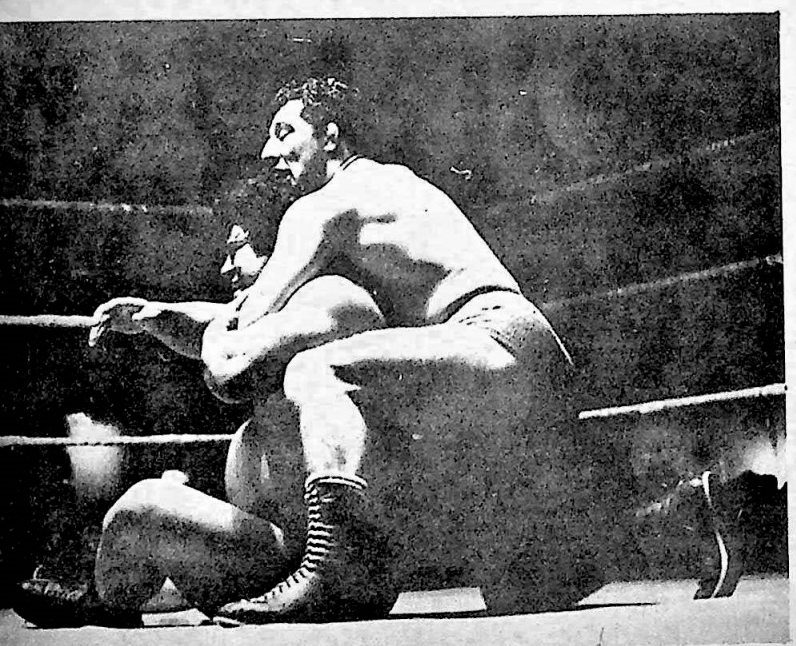
"I admit I don't believe in blowing my own horn," Hady said, thoughtfully, "but I don't think I'm afraid of people, exactly."

We told him that it wasn't fear, but a kind of lack of ambition. "Don't you want to be considered the world's best wrestler someday?"

"It would be nice," he said without enthusiasm.

And there you have it. Jim Hady is not lazy; he just doesn't give a damn. Not just yet, anyway. But, as Jack Britton says, he's still young. When a 26-year-old man from a mining town finds himself making 25 thousand dollars a year, he needs time to settle back and enjoy it. Britton thinks Jim has had enough time.

If he's right—and if it's time for Gentleman Jim Hady to take another giant step—then the "household words" had better look to their laurels. Because Jim is due to step right up there among them! And somebody will have to make room. . . . • *end*



Hady, right, tried for Sleeper Hold after bout was 13 minutes old. But Cortez, strong as a bull, had the reserve power to break free. Hady tried the Sleeper five times unsuccessfully.

LARRY CHENE

(*continued from page* 43)

Larry, "I got homesick. I thought I'd go home for a Christmas vacation—maybe stay a couple of weeks."

So he went home to Detroit. One day, shortly after the Christmas tree had been taken down and the turkey hash digested, Bert Ruby called up his friend and ex-pupil, Larry Chene. Did Larry want to make a few bucks by appearing on TV? Just this one time, Bert assured him.

"Sure," answered Larry, "what have I got to lose?"

Like we said, it was as though Volkswagon had suddenly built a million-dollar factory at Willow Run. Here was a brand new, dynamic, intensely likable personality who was not only a hot shot in the ring, with his exciting brand of wrestling—he was also fun outside. It got so he couldn't walk down the street without bucking a crowd of admirers of all ages. Not that he tried to get away, mind you. Larry loved it. On the sidewalk, in a hotel lobby or a restaurant, whenever he was recognized by the crowd, amid cries of, "There's Larry!" and "Hi, champ!" the smiling, affable Chene would give vent to a flip or a heel-clicking leap, or he would plant a kiss on the cheek of some love-sick teenager.

If Larry loved it, the crowd loved Larry. As of this writing, the love affair between Larry Chene and Detroit is going into its sixth month. And it seems to be growing. We tried to analyze the trance into which this shortish, balding wrestler has thrown the entire state.

His style, as stated, is exciting, a kind of Rocca-Carpentier method that calls upon acrobatic skill, superb showmanship and a deep knowledge of wrestling. Yet, mixed with all that, is the personality of the man himself, it shines through even after the bout is over and he makes his way back to the dressing room. Or between falls when he's interviewed by the TV announcer.

The fans enjoy his interviews. Like Rick Cortez, his arch-enemy, Larry probably could do well in Hollywood as a character actor. He'd make a marvelous gangster-type, a sort of good-bad boy. His face, especially when he smiles, reminds you of Rocca, and he's just as articulate.

He is not modest. Yet, his immodesty is charming in itself; You think, here is a guy who's good, knows it—and proves it. And doesn't lose any sleep over it. This all has to do with Larry's formula: Love your work.

He loves other things beside his work and his family. Golf, for one, shooting in the low 80's and enjoying every minute of it. And fishing. He'd walk out on a thousand-dollar main event if it meant going fishing with somebody like Ted Williams or Jack Sharkey—two of the world's greatest fishermen-athletes.

All in all, Larry Chene believes in the full life. And he lives it without trying too hard.

We asked him if he intended going back to Texas.

He frowned, and we knew it was a tough one to answer. "I still think Texas is great, but still, Detroit is my home. I think I'll stay here until they get tired of me."

"Then you'll be here forever," interrupted Bert Ruby, who had come along to tell Larry he was about to go before the TV cameras.

"No, I might go stale, staying in one place. It might be best to get out of Detroit while I'm ahead—while they still like me—and then come back again, on another Christmas vacation."

"Where would you like to go, meanwhile?" we asked.

Chene grinned, and a glint of mischief filled his eyes. "Oh, where does that guy Rocca wrestle?"

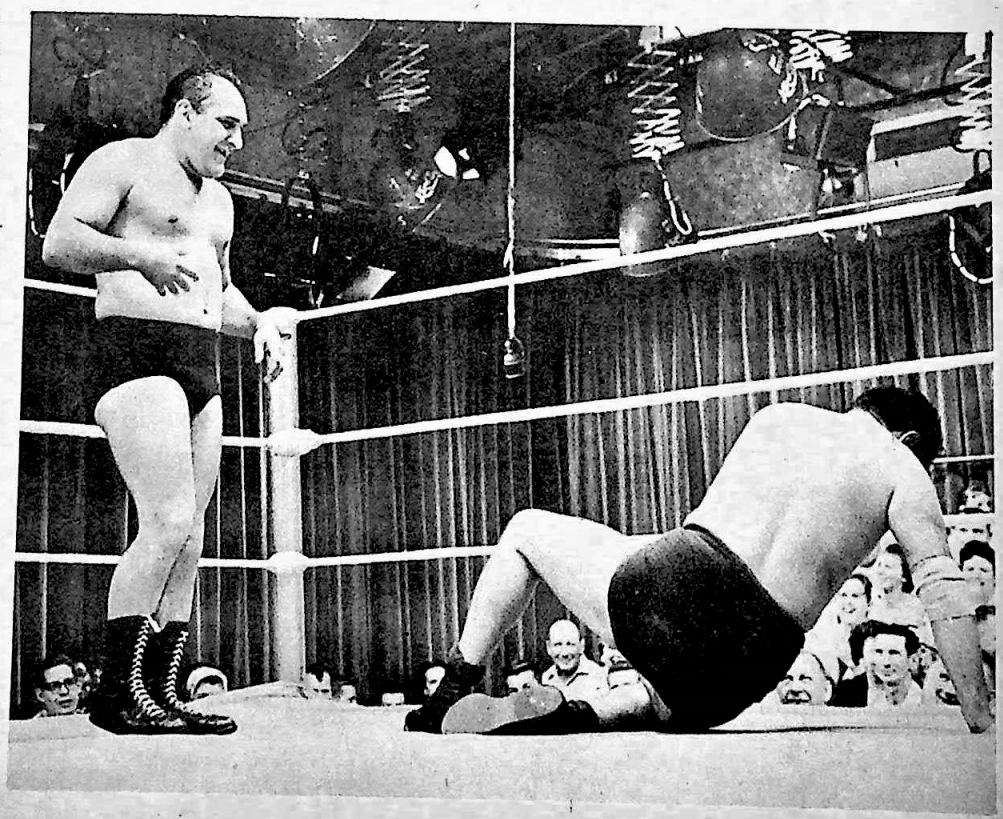
Bert Ruby got into the spirit of it. "He's in that suburb of Detroit—New York."

"Yes," said Larry, "I may go to New York next. I can just see them at the Yankee Stadium—50,000 cheering people, crying, *'Look, there's Larry!'* "

But he winked when he said it; then he turned a cartwheel through the door that led to the TV studio. A roaring cry went up when the crowd saw him.

Now we knew why they liked him.

"If he ever does go to New York," mused Bert Ruby, looking after him, "he'll *have* to wrestle in some place like Yankee Stadium or the Polo Grounds. Otherwise, they'll blow off the roof." • *end*



Finish of studio bout between Larry Chene, standing, and Bad Boy Brown, came when Brown could no longer use leg injured by Chene's repeated leg locks.

RICKEY CORTEZ

(*continued from page* 33)

He actually talks that way. Cortez, in fact, looks as much like an actor as he does a wrestler. There is no doubt—in this department, anyway—but that this impressive young man could, if he chose, make it big in Hollywood. He's the Ernest Borgnine type.

How did he manage to get away from the fly-specked adobe shacks of Mexico City?

He shrugged. "Well, like I said, first I was faster than the bullies, then I was stronger—and finally smarter. I'd heard of other ways of getting away, without becoming a Bull-fighter. One of our big heroes was Rito Moreno—we called him Pajarito. Another was Blackie Guzman. So I decided to use my muscles as well as my head. I went to the gyms around town—there're a thousand of them—and offered to wrestle anybody there. Eventually somebody had to notice me. To make a long story short—somebody did. One thing led to another, and by the time I reached Detroit, I was not only a good wrestler, but a good American. I felt so good at having 'escaped' from servitude and degradation, I *had* to be good!"

Wrestling fans don't think Ricky Cortez is good at all; they think he's real bad. And in the ring, he is. Few rough wrestlers, except for sadists like Killer Kowalski and Johnny Valentine, can arouse such unbridled hatred in an audience. As he stalks about the ring, or around the arena floor, Cortez is a classic example of villainy. He glares at the crowd and his opponent balefully, pure hatred jetting from his dark eyes like death rays.

The night we watched him in Flint, Jim Hady had reopened an old cut above Ricky's left eye. It bled throughout the bout. And as the Mexican monster retreated from an enraged Hady to the comparative safety of the crowd, his blood-covered face was one of the most frightening things my jaded old eyes have ever seen. He was like a mortally wounded tiger stalking through the jungle, seeking vengeance.

We asked why he had run out of the ring when Hady got mad.

"I wasn't afraid of him, if that's what you mean. But Hady is an excitable kid when he gets hurt. If he slugged me once more, I'd decided, I'd really go to work on him—and to hell with the wrestling code book—I'd have punched him silly! So, to avoid getting into trouble with the Commission, I figured I'd better pull out till he cooled off. Not for his sake, for mine!"

It was logical, and we don't intend to take sides. But anyone who, in the heat of a tough match, can keep that cool—at the risk of being thought a coward—has our vote of confidence. It's easy to see how Ricky Cortez used his three big assets—speed, strength and intelligence—not only to get out of the slums, but to come close to the top of his chosen profession.

He'll make the top, very likely. He's only 27 now, and he has the kind of attitude that enables an athlete to go on year after year. A healthy attitude.

The ring was directly above the dressing room. From time to time, a terrific crash would shake the walls and ceiling; it sounded as though ring, referee and wrestlers would be in our laps, any minute. "Guess the Brute is giving Jacobs a hard time," mused Ricky (Abe Jacobs, wrestling Jim Bernard, was indeed getting the worst of it.)

We discussed attitude. "My attitude is healthy for two reasons," said Cortez. "When I'm outside the ring, I forget about wrestling. I think of other things. I go home and play with my baby—my greatest relaxation. I go out on Lake Erie and fish. That's reason number one. Number two—I'm a villain in the ring!"

We asked why that kept him healthy.

"Because, like everybody else, I have a lot of pent-up emotions. We Mexicans are not exactly icebergs when it comes to feelings; w're hot-blooded and hot-tempered. The medical people say you have to get rid of your excess emotion or you'll flip your lid. It's true. When I don't wrestle for a while, I can feel the pressure building up inside. I have to do something violent then, or blow my stack. If I didn't wrestle, I'd probably go hunting for bear, or climb Mt. Everest, or something. So—when I get into the ring, something happens to me. I feel as though I want to tear somebody apart. I know it's just the excess of high spirits, but it scares me at times. The crowd doesn't understand, of course, so they hate me." Cortez shook his head as though saddened by the injustice of the audiences.

We reminded him that he wasn't exactly a Lord Fauntleroy when he had his opponent in trouble. "You've pulled some pretty ungentlemanly stunts in that ring."

Ricky actually looked sheepish. "Okay, I'll confess. Just the physical activity of wrestling isn't enough to let off steam. I have to beat somebody up. If I have to be unfair about it, that's all right with me. It keeps me healthy—and the crowd likes it, whether they'll admit it or not. That's what they pay for—to see me rip Jim Hady's lip off or beat his head on a ring post."

We said he had it all wrong. The crowd paid to see Hady mess *him* up.

Ricky grinned. "Okay, what's the difference? So long as they keep paying to see *somebody* get beat up, I'll keep eating. And so will Hady."

You can't argue with that kind of logic. It comes from a man who knows what he wants and how to get it. That trip-hammer mind of Ricky Cortez is never idle, a testimonial to his ambitions. At home, he spends much of his time reading—and not "escape" reading, at that. He will often reach out with his eyes closed, pluck a volume of the Encyclopedia Brittanica from the shelf, open it at random, and then read the subject before him. Thoroughly.

"I've learned a lot, that way—and there's always a surprise coming up. I've gone through Gold Mining, Mountain Climbing, Cattle, Birds, Ujiji, Volatile Oils, Ptarmigan and Yggdrasil, among others. If nothing else, I'm getting a helluva 'neducation." He laughed. "If I ever have to give up wrestling, it won't matter. I'll be so smart I can become a writer!"

The writer laughed also. "Yeah, but what will you do to get rid of your excess emotion?"

Cortez rose and headed for the shower. "Nothing. I guess I'll just go crazy, like any other writer."

We doubt that he'll ever have to. We don't see anything to prevent Ricky Cortez from wrestling for many years more, and from reaching the pinnacle of the success that a swift little lad in the Mexican slums once dreamed of.

● *end*

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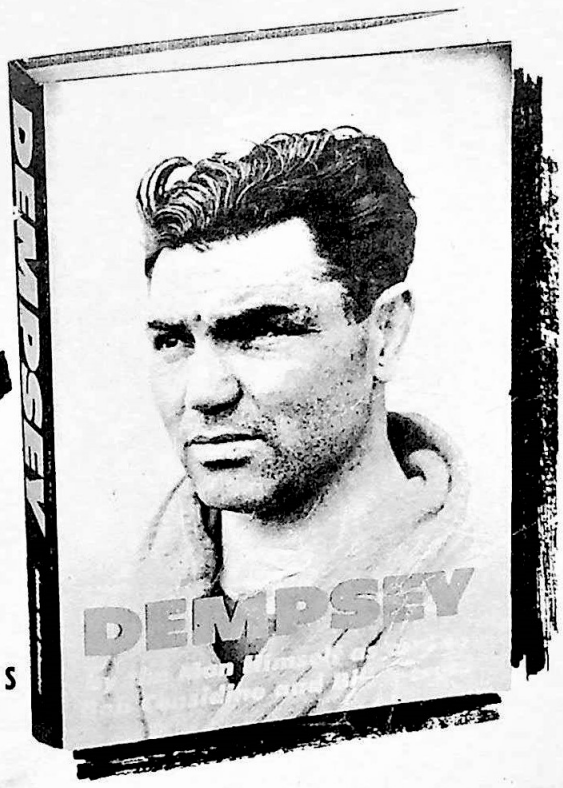

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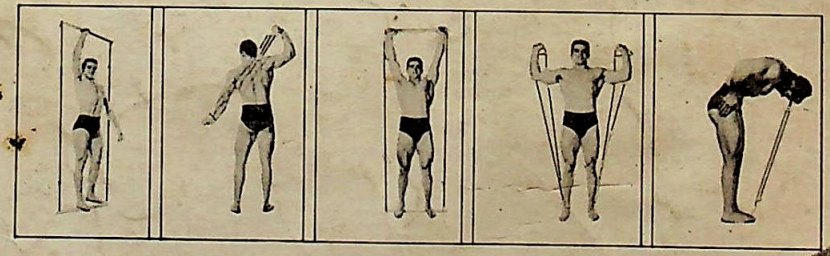

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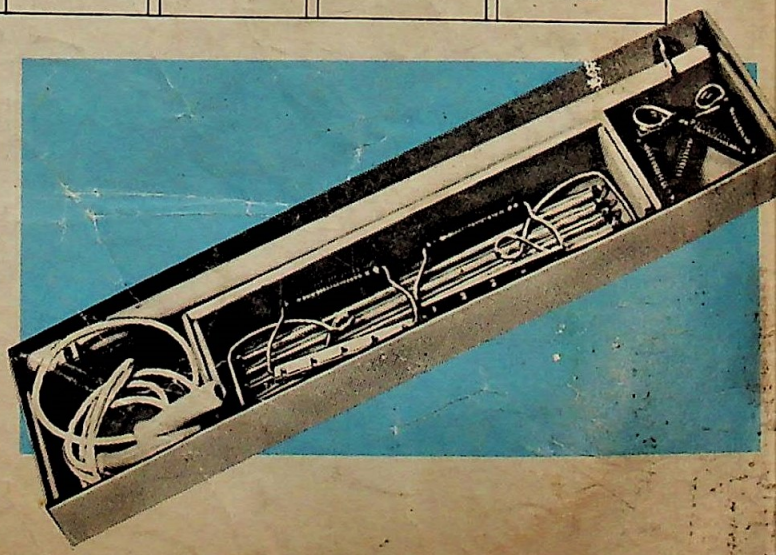
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